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**ART. X.—*Men and Manners in America.***

*Men and Manners in America.* By the author of **CYRIL THORNTON**, etc. 8vo. Philadelphia. 1833.

IN our last number, we noticed at some length the observations of the Rev. Isaac Fidler upon the state of society and literature in this country. Some of our contemporaries have expressed the opinion, that we gave to that work an importance disproportionate to its value. It should be recollected, however, that in order to convey to the public a correct notion of the spirit of the British press, in relation to the United States, the works most suitable for notice are precisely the best and the worst; on the one hand, those which, from the ability and information displayed in them, may really be thought to require refutation, and on the other, those in which the prejudices common to most British travellers are exhibited in their naked proportions, without any accidental advantages of style or general learning, and of course in the form most open to detection and exposure.

Mr. Fidler's work is a brilliant specimen of the latter class, and has a fair chance of retaining, through all succeeding ages, the distinction of being the most absurd book of travels that was ever written,—at least by a clergyman of 'more than ordinary acquirements.' The work before us belongs to the other category, and may, perhaps, be considered in respect of literary execution and general ability as the best British account of this country that has yet been published. The work of Captain Hall is the only one that can come in these respects into competition with it,—and the two are in fact so nearly alike, both in spirit and execution, that it would be hardly worth while to attempt to settle their comparative merits. The work before us is described in the title page as written by the author of *Cyril Thornton*, a novel which is also anonymous, but is known to be the production of a Mr. Hamilton of Edinburgh. This person is, we believe, an officer of the army, living in retirement upon half-pay, of what rank we are unable to say with certainty, the newspapers having complimented him successively with various titles, such as Colonel, Major, Captain, and Lieutenant, some one of which is probably the true one. His *Cyril Thornton*, though of no great value as a novel, ex-

hibits a good deal of literary ability, and would justify us in expecting from its author a work of a pretty high order upon a subject like that of the one before us, to which we think his talent better adapted than for fictitious writing.

This expectation will not be entirely disappointed, nor yet very fully satisfied by the character of the present work. It is undoubtedly, as we have said, in point of literary execution, one of the best that have yet appeared upon the United States. The style is not deficient in strength or spirit, and evinces at times a remarkable power of description, as in the passages on the Falls of Niagara and the river Mississippi. On the other hand, it is far from being uniformly so pure and correct as might be wished,—is often unpardonably coarse, and is pervaded throughout by an affected pertness, and a silly air of pretension, which are offensive from the beginning, and finally become by repetition completely nauseous.

We shall have occasion, in making extracts for other purposes, to give some specimen of these defects in style: and will merely add here, that one of the most remarkable transgressions against the purity of the language occurs in the very passage, in which the learned author is taking the Americans to task for their manifold and flagrant offences in this particular. At the close of his chapter on Boston, he introduces a page or two of observations upon barbarisms in language with the following sentence. ‘Even by the educated and respectable class, the commonest words are often so *transmogrified* as to be placed beyond the recognition of an Englishman.’ *Transmogrified!!!* and this too from the pen of a purist, and in the very sentence in which he is condemning a supposed want of purity in the use of language by others. Truly has it been said, that Nemesis is always on the watch. After this auspicious commencement, our author runs over the usual enumeration of *clever*, *guess*, and the use of *progress* as a verb, and having denounced, in addition to these stock examples, two or three other supposed American barbarisms, all of which may be found recorded in the British provincial glossaries, and are more frequently used in the mother country than they are here, jumps at the following astounding conclusion; ‘unless the present progress of change be arrested by an increase of taste and judgment in the more (*better*) educated classes, there can be no doubt that in another century the dialect of the Americans will become utterly unintelligible to an Englishman, and that

the nation will be cut off from the advantages arising from their participation in British literature.'

Within the limited compass of our reading, we hardly recollect an example of a conclusion, that stands at so utterly hopeless a distance from its premises. Our readers, who have ears and nerves, will, we think, agree with us that the 'word of fear' which we have quoted above from our author's pages, and which, that we may have the full benefit of the invention, is repeated elsewhere, and followed out into the not less delightful derivative noun,—*transmogrification*,—constitutes of itself a grosser offence against the purity of the language,—we will not say than all the minor peccadillos which he has mustered up against us put together, because these really amount to nothing,—but than the sum total of all the errors of this kind that came under his observation, in tolerably good company, in the course of his travels from Boston to New Orleans.

So much for the mere matter of style, which, with the deductions we have mentioned, is in the main good. Of the spirit in which the work is written,—a far more important consideration,—we are compelled to speak in less favorable terms. As friends of the two countries, anxiously desiring, not merely the continuance of the present political good understanding, but the establishment of,—what has never yet existed,—a really kind and cordial feeling between them, we deeply regret that the ablest and best-written work upon this country which has yet appeared from the pen of a British traveller, is also the one which exhibits in the most inveterate and malignant form the common prejudices of the class. The causes that have led to this unfortunate result, it is of course not for us,—imperfectly acquainted as we are with the author's history,—to pretend to investigate. He seems himself to have anticipated the objection which we make to the temper of his book, and in a short apologetic preface, in the form of a dedication, attempts to parry it in the following manner.

'How far, in writing of the institutions of a foreign country, I may have been influenced by the prejudices natural to an Englishman, I presume not to determine. To the impartiality of a cosmopolite I make no pretension. No man can wholly cast off the trammels of habit and education, nor (*or*) escape from the bias of that multitude of minute and latent predilections, which insensibly affect the judgment of the wisest.

‘ But apart from such necessary and acknowledged influences, I am aware of no prejudice, which could lead me to form a perverted estimate of the condition, moral or social, of the Americans. I visited their country with no antipathies to be overcome ; and I doubt not you can bear testimony, that my political sentiments were not such, as to make it probable, that I would regard with an unfavorable eye the popular character of their government. In the United States I was received with kindness, and enjoyed an intercourse, at once gratifying and instructive with many individuals for whom I can never cease to cherish the warmest sentiments of esteem. I neither left England a visionary and discontented enthusiast, nor did I return to it a man of blighted prospects and disappointed hopes. In the business or ambitions of the world I had long ceased to have any share. I was bound to no party, and pledged to no opinions. I had visited many countries, and may, therefore, be permitted to claim the possession of such advantages as foreign travel can bestow.

‘ Under these circumstances, I leave it to the ingenuity of others to discover by what probable, what possible temptation I could be induced to write in a spirit of unjust depreciation of the manners, morals or institutions of a people, so intimately connected with England by the ties of interest and the affinities of common ancestry.’

That a spirit of unjust depreciation is the one that predominates in his work, is,—as we shall have occasion abundantly to show,—very certain. Why this is so, it is, we repeat, not for us to say, but the author has, we think, answered the question in a very satisfactory manner, in the passage immediately preceding the one just quoted.

‘ When I found the institutions and experience of the United States deliberately quoted in the Reformed Parliament, as affording safe precedents for British legislation, and learned that the drivellers who uttered such nonsense, instead of encountering merited derision, were listened to with patience and approbation by men as ignorant as themselves, I certainly did feel that another work on America was yet wanted, and at once determined to undertake a task, which inferior considerations would probably have induced me to decline.’

The amount of this is, that the object of the author, in writing his work, was to furnish his countrymen with a reply to the argument in favor of reform, deduced from the supposed successful operation of democratic principles in this country.

After making this perfectly candid statement, it strikes us that he need not have been so much at a loss to imagine what temptation he could possibly have had to an unjust estimate of our institutions and character. That a person, writing with an avowed political purpose, will, to a certain extent, so color his representations, as may best fit them to effect this purpose, is not perhaps absolutely certain; but the case is undoubtedly a very common one,—so common, indeed, that no individual, however correct his general intentions may be, ought to hesitate a moment in admitting the possibility of its occurrence in his own person. Every impartial and discerning reader must perceive, on the slightest inspection of the work before us, that it did in fact occur in the present instance; that the disposition under which the author made his observations, and of course to a certain extent the character of their results, were determined by his political objects; and that his book, instead of being a real account of Men and Manners in America, as it purports to be, is in substance nothing more than a long *tirade* against the *Bill*, the *whole Bill*, and *nothing but the Bill*.

A considerable portion of the work is in the form of a direct commentary on the political institutions of the United States, and is of course entitled to all the consideration which the arguments alleged against them may fairly deserve. In another and a more extensive portion, the author aims less directly at his mark, and endeavors to prove that the Government is bad, by showing that the people are occasionally deficient in polish and elegance of manner. Now supposing this point to be made out, we cannot think that the conclusion drawn by the worthy traveller would necessarily follow. If it were admitted, for example, that the practice of chewing tobacco, with its natural concomitants, is too common among certain classes of the community, it would not be safe to draw from this fact the inference that the laws of the country are tyrannical, insufficient, or in any way objectionable, for the plain reason that the practice of chewing tobacco is not commanded by law, but is a mere matter of taste and habit.

Again: if the only proper and polite way of eating eggs be,---as our author supposes,---to convey the substance directly from the shell to the mouth, without the intervention of a wine-glass, a dish, or any other instrument except, perhaps, a spoon;---and on this point there are great authorities against

him, for no less a personage than Baron Haussez, lately one of the ornaments of the French Court, and a *gastronome* of high distinction, considers it as great an abomination to eat eggs directly from the shell, as our author to do it in any other way, and makes it a matter of distinct reproach upon the English that they all adopt this practice :—but admitting that our author and those who with him and his countrymen eat from the shell are in the right, and that the Americans, the French, and other nations, who occasionally indulge themselves in an *omelette aux fines herbes*, a glass of mulled champagne or some preparation of the egg other than the *au naturel* are wrong,—and for ourselves we consider the whole controversy no more important than the quarrels of the Big and Little Endians in the empire of Lilliput,—still, however, if we were to grant all that our author can possibly desire in this particular, he could not with any fairness conclude that the Constitution of the United States is a bad form of Government, inasmuch as that instrument prescribes no rule whatever on the subject of eating eggs, but leaves the citizen entirely free to eat them from the shell,—a wine-glass,—in omelettes,—poached, or in any other way that he may think proper.

But without dwelling any longer on preliminary points, we proceed to notice more directly the results of this new tour of observation in the United States. In attempting to discharge this duty, we shall briefly indicate the track pursued by our author, and make some occasional commentaries on his personal adventures, and on his statements respecting the character of the people and the principles and operation of the political institutions of the country.

Our author embarked at Liverpool, on the 16th of October 1831, on board the packet ship New York, Captain Bennet, and after a pleasant and rapid passage, reached New York on the 17th of the following month. His account of an adventure, in itself of no great moment, that happened to him on the very day of his arrival, will serve, as well as almost any other passage in the book, to illustrate the spirit in which it is written.

It had been arranged, it seems, among the passengers in the New York, that they should dine together at Niblo's tavern on the day of their arrival ; and at the hour fixed, our author set forth from his lodgings, to repair to the scene of action. Finding it necessary, as he proceeded, to inquire his way, he stepped for this purpose into a shop, and asked the person in

attendance, if he could give him the direction he wanted. The latter replied that 'he could, and would do it with pleasure,' which he accordingly did. Our author then went his way rejoicing, and reached his tavern in time to partake of the best dinner which he ate in America. Such is the adventure,—one would suppose that it was scarcely of sufficient importance to occupy a place in the traveller's published observations and that, if it did, it would hardly afford occasion for any unfavorable conclusion as to the character of the people. Let us now see the shape which it assumes under the pen of Mr. Hamilton.

'Before quitting the ship, it had been arranged among a considerable number of the passengers, that we should dine together on the day of our arrival, as a proof of parting in kindness and good-fellowship. Niblo's tavern, the most celebrated eating-house at New York, was the scene chosen for this amicable celebration. Though a little tired with my walks of the morning, which the long previous confinement on board of ship had rendered more than usually fatiguing, I determined to explore my way on foot, and having procured the necessary directions at the hotel, again set forth. On my way an incident occurred, which I merely mention to show how easily travellers like myself, on their first arrival in a country, may be led into a misconception of the character of the people. Having proceeded some distance, I found it necessary to inquire my way, and accordingly entered a small grocer's shop. "Pray, Sir," I said, "can you point out to me the way to Niblo's tavern?"—The person thus addressed was rather a gruff-looking man, in a scratch wig, and for at least half a minute kept eyeing me from top to toe, without uttering a syllable. "Yes, Sir, I can," he at length replied, with a stare as broad as if he had taken me for the great Katterfelto. Considering this sort of treatment as the mere *ebullition of republican insolence*, I was in the act of turning on my heel, and quitting the shop, when the man added,—“and I shall have great pleasure in showing it to you.” He then crossed the counter, and accompanying me to the middle of the street, pointed out the land marks by which I was to steer, and gave me the most minute directions for my guidance. I presume that his curiosity in the first instance was excited by something foreign in my appearance; and that having once satisfied himself that I was a stranger, he became on that account more than ordinarily anxious to oblige. This incident afforded me the first practical insight into the manners of the people, and was useful both as a precedent for future guidance, and as explaining the source of



many of the errors of subsequent travellers. Had my impulse to quit the shop been executed with greater rapidity, I should certainly have considered the man as a *brutal barbarian*, and perhaps have drawn an unfair inference with regard to the manners and character of the lower orders of society in the United States.'

*Le vrai*, says the French proverb, *n'est pas toujours vraisemblable*. If such an incident as this were found in one of Molière's comedies, we should say that he had greatly overcharged his character. Our author steps into a grocer's shop to inquire his way; the grocer commences a very courteous answer of ten words, but before he has even time to finish it, the inquirer nearly rushes out of the shop in a transport of offended pride, because forsooth the proprietor thought fit to *look* rather intently at him. Our author doubtless thought, that when so great a personage made his *avatar* upon the shores of our continent, the natives, in coming into his august presence, would at the very least *knock head* in the Chinese fashion, if they did not actually grovel upon the ground before him, like the negro courtiers of Bornoo at the feet of their sultan. That a simple American grocer should not only fail in this, but should actually take the liberty of *looking* intently at a British captain,—or whatever his rank may be,—on half-pay, and he too the author of a rather popular novel, this to be sure was an *ebullition of republican insolence*, which, had not the matter been speedily set right, would unquestionably have stamped the offender as a *brutal barbarian*, and *justified the most unfavorable inferences with regard to the character and manners of the lower orders of society in the United States*.

'This incident,' says our author, 'afforded me the first practical insight into the manners of the people, and was useful as explaining the source of many of the errors of former travellers.' Our readers will probably think, with us, that his account of the incident affords a pretty good insight into his own character, and explains very satisfactorily the source of many of his subsequent errors. We may remark, *en passant*, that the peculiarity of our author's enunciation, which, from the loss of a part of his organs of speech in some of his youthful campaigns, is, we understand, hardly intelligible to a person unaccustomed to it, probably had its effect in calling forth the *look* that offended him so much, as well as the *something foreign in his appearance*, which, however,—if we are rightly informed,—was in fact, in point of costume, generally more than singular.

Our author, on his arrival at New York, took lodgings at Bunker's Hotel, and the next morning assumed his place at the breakfast table with the other inmates of the house. The state of things at his entrance is described as follows:

'I had nearly completed my toilet on the morning after my arrival, when the tinkling of a large bell gave intimation that the hour of breakfast was come. I accordingly descended as speedily as possible to the *salle à manger*, and found a considerable party engaged in doing justice to a meal, which at first glance one would scarcely have guessed to be a breakfast. Solid viands of all descriptions loaded the table, while, in the occasional intervals, were distributed dishes of rolls, toast, and cakes of buck-wheat and Indian corn. At the head of the table sate the landlady, who, with an air of complacent dignity, was busied in the distribution of tea and coffee. A large bevy of negroes was bustling about, ministering with all possible alacrity to the many wants, which were somewhat vociferously obtruded on their attention. Towards the upper end of the table I observed about a dozen ladies, but by far the largest part of the company were of the other sex.'

All this must, to a hungry man, have formed on the whole a rather promising *ensemble*, and one would naturally suppose that our traveller,—who frequently compliments himself upon possessing the hearty and indiscriminating appetite of an old campaigner,—must have made a good breakfast. Most of the guests probably did so, and went their way without imagining that any thing extraordinary had happened. But to the refined sensibilities of our author, the affair was little more than a series of various abominations.

'The contrast of the whole scene with that of an English breakfast table was striking enough. Here was no loitering nor lounging; no dipping into newspapers; no apparent lassitude of appetite; no interval of repose in mastication; but all was hurry, bustle, clamor and voracity, and the business of repletion went forward with a rapidity altogether unexampled. The strenuous efforts of the company were, of course, soon rewarded with success. Departures, which had begun, even before I took my place at the table, became every instant more numerous, and in a few minutes the apartment had become what Moore beautifully describes in one of his songs, a "banquet-hall deserted." The appearance of the table, under such circumstances, was by no means gracious either to the eye or the fancy. It was strewed thickly with the *disjecta membra* of the enter-

tainment. Here lay fragments of fish, somewhat unpleasantly odoriferous; there, the skeleton of a chicken; on the right a mustard-pot upset, and the cloth, *passim*, defiled with stains of eggs, coffee, gravy,—but I will not go on with the picture. One *nasty* custom, however, I must notice. Eggs, instead of being eat (*eaten*) from the shell, are poured into a wine-glass, and after being duly and disgustingly churned up with butter and condiment, the mixture, according to its degree of fluidity, is forthwith either spooned into the mouth, or drunk off like a liquid. The advantage gained by this unpleasant process, I do not profess to be qualified to appreciate, but I can speak from experience to its sedative effect on the appetite of an unpractised beholder.’

In this case, the principal ground of complaint,—the *corpus delicti*,—seems to have been, that the breakfast-table did not look so fresh, and clean and perfect in all its arrangements at the close of the repast, as it did at the beginning. There were stains upon the cloth: and portions of the articles of food, which were partly eaten, remained upon the dishes. Truly, our author is a reasonable man. In Edinburgh, they doubtless manage these things very differently. There, a mustard-pot that is overturned leaves no spot behind it: the cloth and the napkins that have served the purpose of the meal are as smooth and as glossy as they were when they left the landlady’s press, and the bones of the chickens and the fish, as fast as they are denuded to satisfy the appetite of the guests, put on spontaneously a new covering, and look as plump as though nothing had happened. In the same way it is not improbable, that within the precincts of our author’s former experience, the linen appropriated to personal use remained as clean and sweet after two or three weeks’ wearing, as when first put on: and this may partly account for the singular fact, that an individual, so peculiarly nice in all his habits, and so decidedly averse to ‘nastiness’ of any kind,—to use his own elegant phraseology,—should have paid so little attention to the occasional refreshment of his costume during his residence at Bunker’s, that his fellow-boarders, if we are rightly informed, actually held a formal meeting on the subject, at which they passed a resolution, requesting him to change his linen; and at length, finding his manners incorrigibly offensive, were compelled to abate him as a common nuisance, by requesting the master of the house to deliver them from his company.

At the egg question we have already glanced, and its im-

portance is hardly such, as to justify our resuming it at much length. Our author regards it as entirely heterodox, to eat eggs in any other way than directly from the shell. Baron Haussez, on the other hand, denounces the practice of eating them from the shell, as the *nec plus ultra* of barbarism. Highly as we think of the civilization and refinement of the Athens of Great Britain, we are compelled to say, that, on a question of this kind, the authority of the minister of Charles X. is decidedly preferable to that of a Scotch lieutenant on half-pay.

As to the rapidity with which the breakfast was eaten,—and this is one of our author's great grievances,—the real difficulty in this particular case seems to have been that, overdone by the fatigues of the preceding day, perhaps by the pleasures of the parting feast at Niblo's, he had slept too late, and did not reach the table until the company had nearly finished. This circumstance accounts satisfactorily for the early disappearance of the other guests; and for the comparatively disordered state in which he appears to have found the arrangements of the repast. The same topic is, however, repeatedly adverted to on other occasions, which do not admit of the same explanation. Thus, in his account of the dinner at the hotel on the same day, our author states, that he 'beheld the same scene of *gulping* and swallowing, as if for a wager, which his observation at breakfast had prepared him to expect. Each individual seemed to *pitchfork* his food down his *gullet*, without the smallest attention to the wants of his neighbor.' In these remarks, the worthy captain,—if captain he be,—seems to have been a little less select in his choice of terms, than might have been wished, or,—considering the high standard of delicacy he employs in judging the conduct and language of others,—perhaps expected. But without dwelling upon these *minutiae*, as a too great rapidity in despatching their meals has been for some years past a standing topic of reproach upon the Americans, by all the British travellers, and as the matter admits, we think, of an easy and simple explanation, we proceed to treat it very briefly on its merits.

We are of opinion, then, that the length of time devoted to the business of eating is every where determined by personal and accidental considerations, rather than by any peculiarities of national character. The French peasant, for example, who dines upon a piece of brown bread, seasoned perhaps with a

morsel of cheese, or an onion, will spare himself the trouble even of sitting down to table, and may often be seen despatching his simple repast, with great *goût* and gaiety, in the open air at his cottage door. The substantial burgher of all countries, on the other hand, who fares more or less handsomely, if not sumptuously, every day, will probably devote something like an hour to his principal meal. Again; a party of friends, who meet together at the close of the day, in form to dine, but in fact to enjoy each other's conversation and company, will prolong the meeting for several hours; while the same party, on the other hand, with the same viands before them, if restricted in time by any accidental circumstance, will be compelled to abridge their conversation, and to devote themselves chiefly to the mere satisfaction of the wants of nature. Now the error into which the whole herd of British travellers, and our author *tout le premier*, have fallen in regard to this subject, proceeds, as we conceive, from their having overlooked the last of these incontestible truths. The conclusions of these gentlemen, respecting the state of society, manners and literature in the United States, are, as is well known, the results, in general, of observations made in taverns, steamboats, and stage-coaches. That the meals, which are eaten by the travellers in stage-coaches at the public tables in the taverns where they stop along the road, are commonly despatched with some rapidity, is no doubt true: but it is equally certain that there is a special reason for this, which does not operate with the same force upon the nation at large. When a stage-coach stops at a tavern, the company are allowed about half an hour,—perhaps forty minutes,—to breakfast or to dine; and as the time of arrival is uncertain, a quarter or a third part even of this brief space must elapse, before the dishes are placed upon the table. What then is to be done? Is the traveller to undertake to 'loiter and lounge:'—to 'dip into newspapers:'—to 'allow himself an interval of repose in mastication?' If he did, the coachman's horn would sound before he had finished the first cup of coffee, or the first morsel of beef. Is he to refrain entirely from eating, rather than not take his meals with all the leisure of a British nobleman at his seat in the country? Neither appetite nor health would permit this course. What then, we repeat, is he to do? The answer is plain;—not '*gulp and swallow as if for a wager*:'—not '*pitchfork his food down his gullet*, without the least attention to

the wants of his neighbors ; '—for we do not admit that these coarse phrases give a correct notion of the manner of proceeding at any decent public table in this country, or of any thing except the want of good breeding in the writer that uses them : but—put formality in his pocket, and without dawdling over newspapers or stopping to discuss disputed points in theology or politics, seat himself at the table and make a moderate meal with all convenient despatch, that he may be ready to take his place in the coach, at the time appointed. This is what the traveller in stage-coaches is compelled to do, and what he really does, not merely in this country, but all the world over.

Such we suppose to be the secret of the extraordinary rapidity in the despatch of meals in this country, which has for several years past given so much uneasiness to the British travellers. On the occasion particularly alluded to by our author, the persons, whose early departure from the table annoyed him so much, had probably arrived fifteen minutes before in one coach, and were going away fifteen minutes after in another. That gentlemen, who meet in the way of dinner parties for conversation and society, are in any haste to separate, is so far from being true, that the prevailing error, here as in England, is precisely the opposite one. In France, the practice is for the whole company to retire from the table together, on these occasions, at the close of the meal, which seldom occupies more than an hour and a half. Here, on the contrary, as in England, it is usual for the gentlemen to remain after the ladies have retired, and sit over their wine two or three hours in succession, not unfrequently till midnight. If this do not satisfy our author, we should recommend it to him to look well to his own ways, and join the Temperance Society as speedily as possible. For ourselves, if we were disposed to suggest to our countrymen any change in their habits in this particular, the counsel we should give them would certainly be not to prolong but to abridge their potations, and adjourn in better season than they now do to the drawing-room.

Without enlarging any farther upon this subject, we shall merely add, that the standard of decorum at the public dinner-tables in this country seems to be at least as high as in England,—if we may draw any general conclusions from the following account of the proceedings of the Liverpool Agricultur-

al Society, on a recent occasion of this description. We have been present at a considerable number of the public festivals of Agricultural and other Societies in this country, but have never happened to witness any 'new surtouts split from the collar downwards,'—any 'unauthorized visibility of white under vestures,'—any black print of a boot on the pure damask beside our plate,'—or any disposition in the guests to 'peregrinate amongst decanters, glasses and plates' upon the top of the tables: all which, and more, appear to have been among the interludes and *divertissemens* of the Liverpool dinner, and may, perhaps, have become general in the mother country.

'The annual dinner was announced to be given in Lucas's Repository, Great Charlotte street, at five o'clock; and considerably prior to that hour, the door was besieged by a company, of whom, as far as could be judged outwardly, it did not seem that a good dinner was the last thing to stand in fear. Before the opening of the door, the crowd increased much in numbers, and more in impatience, and when, at length, a small crevice was made, it agreed so little with their expectation of making a full sweep upon the viands when the large folding gates should have expanded for their simultaneous ingress, that out of revenge the crushing became only more violent and determined, till it might have been doubted whether the wrong party had not been brought out of the Infirmary yard to dine, and the visitors and candidates left behind. In vain the persons keeping the entrance cried out shame, and those who were nearly in enforced upon the rear the uselessness of struggling, so long as all were sure of admission; the hunching, and elbowing, and complaining still continued, in a way which, it was very plain from the unequivocal expressions of some of the sufferers, will be certain of allowing more room at the door-way on a subsequent occasion. That the affair was egregiously mismanaged was expressed in very unceremonious terms, and if the right honorable chairman had found no other means of entering the room than by enduring the compressure of such an immense mass of human bodies, till it appeared sufficient to have flattened the two sides of his ribs together as easily as it would have flattened his hat, we think he would have excepted that part of the day's proceeding from the character of being 'an honor to the town of Liverpool.' We can only say, that however such a manipulating might be sustained before dinner, it would not have done after. Amidst all this suffering, it was not to be supposed that the minor evils of rent garments, and seams split open, would be wanting: accordingly, the wo-begone aspect of many a good piece of broad-

cloth attested the desperate conflict it had passed through ; people, however, were too glad to get in, although it might be in the garb of a magpie, through the *unauthorized visibility of their white under vestures*.

‘ It would certainly have taken something more than ordinarily accommodating tempers withinside, to have restored good humor, after all the spleen engendered at the entrance. The opinions on the entertainment ought, therefore, in justice to be received with that qualification. The dishes supplied were of the best kind, substantial, and in sufficient abundance, and the number of the guests, which amounted to between six and seven hundred, must also be taken into consideration. This, indeed, gave occasion for some especial congratulations from the head of the table, and no one can deny that there was a satisfaction in seeing the agricultural interest of the country in such a flourishing state, and so many of its friends rallying round the cause ; but we speak of the dinner itself ; and we do think, that if, when you have survived the perils and punishment of the passage in, you sit down, albeit with the *back of your new surtout split from the collar downwards*, resolving to console your stomach at the table for what you have suffered in your liver at the door, some subject, much more hungry than polite, runs across the table, leaving the *black print of his boot on the pure damask beside your plate*, or shaking the questionable dirt from his sole over the viand upon which your mouth was already feeding by anticipation, and all this, because, having run up between two long rows of tables, and finding neither room nor escape at the top, he is obliged to scale over and *peregrinate amongst decanters, and glasses, and plates*, till he is lucky enough to find a location ; if you are to shift for your dinner as you best can, amidst an accumulation of the dirty plates, exhibiting the refuse of the first course in agreeable variety, simply because there are no waiters, or they will not attend to you ; if when the cheese and celery is placed on some of the tables, after waiting till you are tired, as a last argument you peremptorily refuse to allow the cloth to stir till it is brought, (in which, though done for the sake of justice, you cannot help taking the appearance of a greedy clownishness,) and are at length compelled to submit with a bad grace on the solemn assurance to every successive application that there is none to be had ; if these are the ordinary concomitants of an agricultural feast, they are inconveniences for which neither the compliments of a secretary of state, nor the bad speeches and worse songs of a young heir of nobility, are an adequate recompense.’



If we may trust to the accuracy of the anecdote related in the following paragraph, which rests, however, on merely newspaper authority, it would seem that our author attempted to introduce into this country the agreeable innovation of ‘peregrinating amongst decanters, glasses and plates’ upon the dinner table, which was practised with so much success at Liverpool, and may perhaps have become general in England. We may remark, *en passant*, that notwithstanding his great complaints of the rapidity with which food is *bolting*,—to use another of his choice phrases,—in this country, it would seem that on this occasion he despatched business with much more expedition than his fellow-travellers, and that he was too impatient of their delay even to wait for the retirement of the ladies.

‘Colonel Hamilton, so called, the author of “Men and Manners in America,” conducted himself while in this country with less of the air of a gentleman or man of good breeding, than any traveller who has visited us for years. From all parts of the country we have anecdotes of his conduct, which reflect upon him the utmost discredit. One of them is related as follows in the Albany Argus :—“On the passage of the Hudson, in one of our most richly furnished day boats, the table arrangements of which, as well as the whole internal government, are particularly well ordered, Captain H., seated at breakfast, on the cushioned seat inside of the table, with ladies on each side of him, rose before a single lady had left the table, and attempted to step upon and across it. He was arrested by the prompt and loud command of the captain of the boat. ‘Down, Sir! No man puts his foot upon my table, whilst I have the honor to sit at its head.’ The Englishman shrank back, chagrined and rebuked. Indeed, such was his mortification, that although he had entered and paid his passage to Albany, he stopped at the first landing, (West Point.) Whether it was on this occasion that, as the N. Y. Mirror intimates, he was rebuked by the host of the West Point Hotel, for a want of civility in the ladies’ drawing-room, we are not informed.”’

From the inexorable severity of our author in every thing relating to the economy of the table, one would naturally conclude that he belonged to a community in which the science of cookery was carried to the highest perfection, and the etiquette of the banqueting-room understood and practised with the nicest exactness. How far this is really the case in England, our readers have been enabled in part to judge from the

heresy into which he and most of his countrymen have fallen in regard to the proper manner of eating eggs, and which we have already exposed upon the unquestionable authority of one of the ex-ministers of Charles X.,—a prince renowned for his love of good eating,—and who, unfortunately for him, thought much more, in arranging his cabinet, of the gastronomical attainments of the candidates for his favor, than of their political principles. That this is not the only error into which the English have fallen in regard to this matter, and that the science of eating and drinking is not in general carried by them to such a degree of perfection as to authorize a traveller, in his quality of Englishman, to come here and take us to task, *ex cathedrâ*, for some pretended infractions of the strict rules of gastronomy, is rendered sufficiently probable by the following remarks, which we borrow from the same authentic source alluded to above.

‘To enjoy one’s self at table is, in France, an axiom of good sense and good company. In England, on the contrary, to eat to live, seems to be the sole object; there the refinements of cookery are unknown. It is not, in a word, a science; neither does the succession in which dishes should be served up appear to be studied. To cover a table with immense pieces, boiled or roasted, and to demolish them, in the confusion in which chance has placed them, appears to be the whole gastronomic science of the country. The most ordinary seasoning of the English *cuisine* is a profusion of spices, unsparingly thrown into the sauces. To correct the effect of this, recourse is had to the insipid simplicity of plain-boiled vegetables, which continually circulate round the table, and with which the host would fain load the guest’s plate. The meat is either boiled or roasted. The fish is always boiled, and is served invariably with melted butter. The numerous transformations which the natives of the deep undergo before appearing on a French table, are altogether unknown in England. Eggs are excluded from English dinner tables, and even when produced at other meals, they are served in the shell; for the talent of making an omelette enters not into the education of an English cook. English fowls are of an indifferent quality; and game is subjected to a process of roasting which deprives it of all its flavor. The confectionary is badly made and without variety. The vegetables, condemned only to figure as correctives of a too exciting *cuisine*, do not appear upon the table. The *entremets* are limited to a very scanty supply of creams and insipid jellies.

‘The following is the order in which an English dinner is served. The first course comprises two soups of different kinds; one highly peppery, in which float morsels of meat; the other a soup *à la Française*. They are placed at either extremity of the table, and helped by the master and mistress of the house. They are succeeded by a dish of fish, and by roast beef, of which the toughest part is served round. Where there is no *plateau*, a salad occupies the middle of the table. This course being removed, regular *entrées* are brought in, and the servants hand round dishes with divisions, containing vegetables. The course which follows is equivalent to the second course in France; but, prepared without taste, it is served confusedly. Each guest attacks (without offering to his neighbor) the dish before him.

‘The creams have often disappeared before the roast is thought of; which, ill-carved, always comes cold to him who is to partake of it. The English carve on the dinner table, and as, before proceeding to this operation, each person is asked whether he wishes to taste of the dish or not, a considerable time is lost in fetching the plate of the person who accepts. A dinner never lasts less than two hours and a half or three hours, without including the time the gentlemen sit at table after the departure of the ladies. The salad appears again before the dessert, flanked by some plates of cheese. After the cloth is removed, dried and green fruit with biscuit are placed on the table. These compose the not very brilliant dessert. The serving up of the dinner, however, is the part about which the English give themselves the least trouble. Their table only presents an agreeable *coup d’œil* before dinner. It is then covered with the whitest linen, and a service of plate of greater variety, richer, and more resplendent than is to be seen in any other country.’

It will be seen, that the objections made by Baron Haussez to the economy of an English table, are substantially the same with those which our author urges against us, the article eggs,—in which we happen to be orthodox,—always excepted. If the Americans, according to our author, ‘*pitchfork their food down their gullets* without the smallest attention to their neighbors,’ the English, in like manner, in the more courtly phraseology of the noble Frenchman, ‘attack, without offering to their neighbors, the dish set before them.’ If, even at the parting feast at Niblo’s,—in many respects an agreeable exception to most of our author’s experiences in this country,—‘the greater part of the dishes were cold before the guests were prepared to attack them,’ so in England, accord-

ing to Baron Haussez, 'the roast, ill-carved, always comes cold to him who is to partake of it.' If, on the same great occasion in New York, there was 'no attempt to serve the chaotic entertainment in courses, a fashion, indeed, but little prevalent in the United States : ' so in England, 'the succession in which dishes should be served up does not appear to be studied. To cover a table with immense pieces, boiled or roasted, and to demolish them in the confusion in which chance has placed them, appears to be the whole gastronomic science of the country.' If, in America, 'the dressed dishes are decidedly bad, the sauces being composed of little else than liquid grease,' so in England, 'the fish is always boiled, and is served invariably with melted butter.' This last point has in fact been for some time past a standing subject of reproach, on the part of continental travellers, against the natives of the fast-anchored isle. 'What a country,'—said the Neapolitan ambassador Caraccioli, after residing for some time at London,— 'What a country for a Christian to live in ! Twenty religions and only one kind of sauce !' This was of course the eternal melted butter.

It appears, however, that in these,—and the same is true of most of the other,—points the complaints made against the American and English domestic economy are precisely the same. We suppose the real truth to be, that both these worthies (our author and Haussez) are, perhaps with some exaggerations, partly in the right,—that the style of cooking and serving up a dinner is in fact substantially the same in England and in this country,—and that the science of gastronomy is not in either carried to quite the same height of perfection, as in France. For ourselves, we cannot say, that this is with us a matter of very poignant regret. We are rather disposed, on the contrary, to apply to this subject the remark of Themistocles, who admitted that he played indifferently upon the flute, but consoled himself with the reflection, that he was a pretty good proficient in politics ; or, in his own language, that he knew how to make a great state out of a little one. We make no professions of insensibility to the value of a good dinner :—'the man,' as Dr. Johnson justly observes, 'who neglects his stomach (employing a broader word), will be very apt to neglect every thing else.' But with all our respect for this valuable member, and the art which provides for satisfying its wants, we conceive that there are other arts of still more importance,

the superiority in which is, at least, some compensation for the want of truffled turkeys and Perigord pies. But, however this may be, it is at all events quite ridiculous for an Englishman to come here and point out, with the air of making a great discovery, as blemishes in our domestic economy, the precise usages which have been for two centuries the standing topics of reproach upon his own countrymen; and which, as far as they occur at all, do in fact prevail to precisely the same extent on both sides of the Atlantic.

But it is time to quit this subject, however interesting, and proceed to something else. We have accompanied our author to the banqueting-hall, and have found him quarrelling with his bread and butter. Let us now attend him to the ball-room. Here, at least, as a military man and a bachelor, we might have expected to find him, if ever, in good humor. Unluckily, in order to substantiate his objections to the political institutions of the country, in the mode of argument which he has adopted in the work before us, it was necessary to show, not only that the gentlemen chew tobacco, and eat eggs in an irregular way, but that the *tournure* of the ladies is not exactly what it should be. If it can be made out, that the *belles* of New York and the other principal cities are deficient in the 'nameless graces' that adorn our author's countrywomen, it will follow as a matter of course, that the Constitution and laws of the United States are a complete failure: their principal object being, as is well known, to regulate the dress and deportment of the fairer part of the creation. This consideration seems, after some resistance, to have fairly overcome our author's gallantry, and he addresses himself to the agreeable task of finding fault with the appearance and manners of the New York fashionables, with a degree of resolution, that would have done honor to a better cause. The result is exhibited in the following extract.

'On the last night of the year there was a public assembly, to which I received the honor of an invitation. The ball-rooms were very tolerable, but the entrance detestable. It led close past the bar of the City Hotel, and the ladies, in ascending the stair, which, by the by, was offensively dirty, must have been drenched with tobacco-smoke. Within, however, I found assembled a great deal of beauty. At seventeen, nothing can be prettier than a smiling damsel of New York. At twenty-two,

the same damsel, metamorphosed into a matron, has lost a good deal of her attraction. I had never been in so large and miscellaneous a party before. I looked about for solecisms of deportment, but could detect none on the part of the ladies. There was, however, a sort of *Transatlanticism* about them; and even their numerous points of resemblance to my fair countrywomen, had the effect of marking out certain shadowy differences, to be felt rather than described.

‘There was certainly an entire absence of what the French call *l’air noble*,—of that look of mingled elegance and distinction, which commands admiration rather than solicits it. Yet the New York ladies are not vulgar. Far from it. I mean only to say that they are *not precisely European*; and with the possession of so much that is amiable and attractive, they may safely plead guilty to want of absolute conformity to an arbitrary standard, the authority of which they are not bound to acknowledge.

‘But what shall be said of the gentlemen? Why, simply that a party of the new police, furnished forth with the requisite *tog-gery*, would have played their part in the ball-room, with about as much grace. There is a certain uncontrollable rigidity of muscle about an American, and a want of sensibility to the lighter graces of deportment, which makes him, perhaps, the most un-hopeful of all the votaries of Terpsichore. In this respect the advantage is altogether on the side of the ladies. Their motions are rarely inelegant, and never grotesque. I leave it to other travellers to extend this praise to the gentlemen.’

The young ladies and gentlemen of New York, are certainly under great obligations to the gallant major for the civility with which he is pleased to speak of them, and will doubtless be happy to profit by his suggestions. It is rather unfortunate, that he has not been able to describe more particularly the newly-discovered offence of *Transatlanticism*, which the former are supposed to have committed, or the ‘shadowy differences’ between their manners, and those of his own countrywomen. In the absence of rules for the improvement of their *tournure*, our *transatlantic* fashionables will naturally look for examples, and with the view of aiding their researches, we beg leave to offer them the following description of a ball at Brighton,—one of the residences of the Court,—extracted from the late work of Prince Pückler Muscau. They will see at a glance, how much they have to gain by endeavoring to make their deportment more *precisely European*.

‘ A narrow stair-case led directly into the ball-room, which was ill-lighted and miserably furnished, and surrounded with worsted cords, to divide the dancers from the spectators. An orchestra for the musicians was hung with ill-washed draperies, which looked like sheets hung out to dry. Imagine a second room near it, with benches along the walls, and a large tea-table in the middle ; in both rooms, the numerous company, raven black from head to foot, *gloves inclusive* ; a melancholy style of dancing, without the least trace of vivacity and joyousness, so that the only feeling you have, is that of compassion for the fatigue the poor people are enduring, and you have a true idea of the Brighton Almack’s, for so these very fashionable balls are called. The whole establishment is droll enough. Miss W., to whom I was introduced, was by far the prettiest and most graceful girl in the room, and I was almost tempted to dance once more, though from vanity, (for I always danced badly,) I renounced that so-called pleasure years ago. I might safely enough have attempted it here, for, God knows, *no where do people jump about more awkwardly, and a man who waltzes in time is a real curiosity.*’

Again : we are told on the same high authority, that

‘ The *tournure* of the English ladies, with few exceptions, is indeed as awkward as any thing to be seen at B.—Some of them have passed a year or two in France, and are distinguished by a better *tournure* and style of dress.’

Baron Haussez’s ideas on these subjects are nearly similar. He describes, in the following manner, a ball given at one of the first houses in London, and represented in the newspapers of the day, as one of the most brilliant of the season.

‘ At twelve o’clock the ball-room was thrown open. For a few minutes the other rooms were freed of the unpleasant crowd ; but the respite was of short duration, for the carriages, which every moment continued to set down fresh company in a ratio disproportioned to the extent of the apartments, obliged, at length, a part of the assembly to take refuge in the hall, which was quietly abandoned by the servants, these latter establishing their head-quarters on the steps outside the door. To move was now impossible for those who had not the strength to use their elbows, or the courage to leave a portion of their dress in the midst of the crowd.

‘ The supper room was thronged with people who could not make their way out : they who, dying with thirst, in vain at-

tempted to enter this apartment, accused those within of immoderate appetite.

‘In the ball-room there was the same crowding, the same suffocation, with this additional difference, that the male dancers opposed to the approach of the crowd effective *coups de pied*, and the ladies a certain portion of their person which shall be nameless.’

So much for the ‘nameless graces’ of our author’s fair countrywomen, and the *precisely European tournure*, in which the New York *belles* are, it seems, deficient. In quoting these passages from the works of the German Prince and the French Ex-minister, we desire, however, to be understood as by no means sanctioning or approving the views taken in them of English manners. These views are obviously sketched in the same spirit of wanton and malignant caricature, that distinguishes those of our author. We quote them merely as offsets to his, for the purpose of showing that other communities, which are justly regarded by all as preëminent in civilization and refinement, and the very highest circles in those communities, are obnoxious to, and have, in fact, been made the objects of similar misrepresentation. *Seek and ye shall find*, is as true of finding faults as of any thing else: and it is, we think, not a little creditable to the *tournure* of the New York *belles*, that so determined a critic as our author, proceeding in the avowed intention of seeing something wrong,—looking about, as he says himself, for solecisms of deportment,—is compelled to invent a new word a foot and a half long, the meaning of which he does not pretend to know himself, in order to be able to impute to them even a *shadow* of variation from the nicest standards of European refinement. What the charge of *transatlanticism*, if examined, would really amount to, it will be time enough to consider, when our author shall have established his claims to the character of an *arbiter elegantiarum*. As the case now stands, we cannot think that a person, whose manners are so offensive that he could not be tolerated in a respectable boarding-house,—who attempted, in the presence of ladies, to walk upon the dinner-table,—and who puts into a formal journal of his travels, language too coarse for a decent fore-castle,—is qualified to sit in judgment upon the shadowy and indescribable differences between the manners of the fashionable circles of different countries.



Our readers will judge from the specimens which we have taken, without much choice, chiefly because they happened to stand pretty near the opening of the work, of the spirit and temper, in which it is written. We cannot, of course, undertake to comment with the same detail upon all our author's sayings and doings, nor would it be necessary. A knowledge of the disposition in which he writes, is the proper antidote to his continual, and in many cases, obviously malignant and ungentlemanly misrepresentations. His remarks throughout the whole of his long tour, though not always destitute of shrewdness, and occasionally expressed with point and spirit, are marked, in general, with the same resolute spirit of fault-finding, and the same air of impertinent pretension, amounting at times to complete fatuity, which we have already noticed. At Providence, for example, the principal objects of attention, as our readers are aware, are the manufactories and the university. With most travellers, who might have occasion to pass a day in that city, it would have been a matter of course to visit these establishments, and to make the acquaintance of President Wayland, one of the most distinguished of our scientific and intellectual men. Our author disposes of this part of his subject in the following modest and summary way.

‘ Providence is the capital of the State of Rhode Island, and contains about 25,000 inhabitants. It stands at the foot and on the brow of a hill, which commands a complete view of the fine bay. The great majority of the houses are built of wood, interspersed, however, with tenements of brick, and a few which are at least fronted with stone. It contains considerable cotton manufactories, which,—*boasting no knowledge of such matters*,—I was not tempted to visit. The college appears a building of some extent, and is finely situated on the summit of a neighboring height. *The roads were so obstructed by snow, as to render climbing the ascent a matter of more difficulty than I was in the humor to encounter*; and so it was decreed, that Brown’s College should remain by me unvisited.’

Instead of troubling his readers with dissertations on these unimportant topics, he selects for discussion the weightier matter of his own dinner at the tavern, upon which he descants in the following exquisite style.

‘ Having finished my ramble, I returned to the inn; where a very tolerable dinner awaited my appearance. It was the first time I had dined alone since leaving England, and, like my

countrymen generally, I am disposed to attach considerable importance to the privilege of choosing my dinner, and the hour of eating it. It is only when alone that one enjoys the satisfaction of feeling that he is a distinct unit in creation, a being *totus, teres, atque rotundus*. At a public ordinary, he is but a fraction, a decimal, at most, but, very probably, a centesimal of a huge masticating monster, with the appetite of a Mastodon or a Behemoth. He labors under the conviction, that his meal has lost in dignity what it has gained in profusion. He is consorted involuntarily with people to whom he is bound by no tie but that of temporary necessity, and, with whom, except the immediate impulse of brutal appetite, he has probably nothing in common. A man, like an American, thus diurnally mortified and abased from his youth upwards, of course knows nothing of the high thoughts which visit the imagination of the solitary, who, having finished a good dinner, reposes with a full consciousness of the dignity of his nature, and the high destinies to which he is called. The situation is one, which naturally stimulates the whole inert mass of his speculative benevolence. He is at peace with all mankind, for *he reclines on a well-stuffed sofa*, and there are wine and walnuts on the table. He is on the best terms with himself, and recalls his own achievements in arms, literature, or philosophy, in a spirit of the most benign complacency. If he look to the future, the prospect is bright and unclouded. If he revert to the past, its "written troubles," its failures and misfortunes are erased from the volume, and his memories are exclusively those of gratified power. *He is in his slippers, and comfortable robe-de-chambre*, and what to him, at such a moment, are the world and its ambitions? I appeal to the philosopher, and he answers,—Nothing !

This is the true Malvolio vein. 'Sitting in my state, calling my officers about me *in my branched velvet gown*, having come from a *day-bed*, where I left Olivia sleeping,—letting them know I know my place as I would they should do theirs.' &c. Even this, however, is improved upon at Philadelphia. The water-works of that city are justly reckoned among the principal curiosities of the place, and indeed of the country. These too our author declined seeing, for reasons still more extraordinary than those, which prevented him from visiting the cotton manufactories and the university at Providence.

'The Philadelphians, however, pride themselves far more on their water-works than on their State-House. Their *Io Pæans* on account of the former are loud and unceasing, and I must say, the annoyance which these occasion to a traveller, is very

considerable. A dozen times a-day was I asked whether I had seen the water-works, and on my answering in the negative, I was told that I positively must visit them; that they were unrivalled in the world; that no people but the Americans could have executed such works, and by implication, that no one but an Englishman, meanly jealous of American superiority, would omit an opportunity of admiring their unrivalled mechanism.

‘There is no accounting for the eccentricities of human character. *I had not heard these circumstances repeated above fifty times, ere I began to run restive, and determined not to visit the water-works at all.* To this resolution I adhered, in spite of all annoyance, with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause. Of the water-works of Philadelphia, therefore, I know nothing, and any reader, particularly solicitous of becoming acquainted with the principle of this remarkable piece of machinery, must consult the pages of other travellers.’

This we suppose to be the *nec plus ultra* of fatuity. That a man, possessing, no doubt, originally, the usual stock of ordinary good sense, should have permitted his head to be turned to this extent, by the little success of writing a tolerably popular second-rate novel, is a melancholy proof, in addition to a thousand others, of the facility with which that operation is performed, especially when the *knowledge-box* happens, as was probably the case in the present instance, to be naturally none of the strongest.

With Boston, and the society which he saw here, our author professes to have been very much pleased, although, as far as facts are concerned, his observations are exceedingly scanty. Having travelled by mail from Providence to Boston, and resided three weeks in the latter city, he was of course qualified to pass judgment *ex cathedrâ* upon the New England character, and accordingly writes, while at Boston, two long chapters of general remarks upon that subject. As the impression made upon him by the only part of New England which he had seen, seems to have been decidedly agreeable, one would naturally have expected that any conclusions, which he might have thought proper to draw from the materials in his possession, would have been rather favorable than otherwise. Instead of this, the two chapters are written throughout in a strain of almost unmingled invective. To draw such conclusions from such premises, argues some principle of conduct deeper than simple thoughtlessness, or mere political

and national prejudice, and seems to require the supposition of a strong personal disgust in the writer. Whether any feeling of that kind had been generated by the gentle admonitions upon his deportment, which he is understood to have received at the hotel in New York, and on board the North River steamboat, we are not informed. He appears to have felt, that an apology was necessary for the precipitation with which he had formed his opinions. In a note upon one of the chapters alluded to, he states that 'the observations on the New England character would have been more appropriately deferred till a later period of the work, but *having written them, they must now stand where chance has placed them.* I have only to beg that they may be taken, not as the hasty impressions received during a few days' or weeks' residence in Boston, but as the final result of my observations on this interesting people, both in their own States and in other portions of the Union.' How the contents of two chapters, written at Boston, can be regarded as the results of observations made afterwards in other places, and why it was absolutely necessary that they should stand, because he had written them, our author has not condescended to explain. The presumption undoubtedly is, that it would have derogated from the dignity of so great a personage, to correct a rough draft, or even to alter the arrangement of his matter; and the passage affords another example of the same graceful modesty that shines so conspicuously in those which describe his proceedings at Philadelphia and Providence. We select from the two chapters in question a few of the more pointed and characteristic paragraphs, as specimens of the tone and manner of the whole.

'Mammon has no more zealous worshipper than your true Yankee. His homage is not merely that of the lip, or of the knee; it is an entire prostration of the heart; the devotion of all powers, bodily and mental, to the service of the idol. He views the world but as one vast exchange, on which he is impelled, both by principle and interest, to over-reach his neighbors if he can. The thought of business is never absent from his mind. To him there is no enjoyment without traffic. He travels snail-like, with his shop or his counting-house on his back, and, like other hawkers, is always ready to open his budget of little private interests for discussion or amusement. The only respite he enjoys from the consideration of his own affairs, is the time he is pleased to bestow on prying into yours. In regard to the latter, he evidently considers that he has a perfect right to unlimited

sincerity. There is no baffling him. His curiosity seems to rise in proportion to the difficulty of its gratification. He will track you through every evasion, detect all your doublings, or, if thrown out, will hark back so skilfully on the scent, that you are at length fairly hedged in a corner.

‘A New Englander passes through the statutory process of education, and enters life with the intimate conviction, that he has mastered, if not the *omne scibile*, at least every thing valuable within the domain of intellect. It never occurs to him as possible, that he may have formed a wrong conclusion on any question, however intricate, of politics or religion. He despises all knowledge abstracted from the business of the world, and prides himself on his stock of practical truths. In mind, body, and estate, he believes himself the first and noblest of God’s creatures. The sound of triumph is ever on his lips, and, like a man who has mounted the first step of a ladder, it is his pride to look down on his neighbors, whom he overtops by an inch, instead of directing his attention to the great height yet to be surmounted.

‘Jonathan is sober and industrious, but his reputation for honesty is at a discount. The whole Union is full of stories of his cunning frauds, and of the impositions he delights to perpetrate on his more simple neighbors. Whenever his love of money comes in competition with his zeal for religion, the latter is sure to give way. He will insist on the scrupulous observance of the Sabbath, and cheat his customer on the Monday morning. His life is a comment on the text, *Qui festinat ditescere, non erit innocens*. The whole race of Yankee peddlers, in particular, are proverbial for dishonesty. These go forth annually in thousands to lie, cog, cheat, swindle, in short, to get possession of their neighbors’ property, in any manner it can be done with impunity. Their ingenuity in deception is confessedly very great. They warrant broken watches to be the best time-keepers in the world; sell pinchbeck trinkets for gold; and have always a large assortment of wooden nutmegs, and stagnant barometers. In this respect they resemble the Jews, of which race, by the by, I am assured, there is not a single specimen to be found in New England. There is an old Scotch proverb, “Corbies never pick out corbies’ een.”

‘The New Englanders are not an amiable people. One meets in them much to approve, little to admire, and nothing to love. They may be disliked, however, but they cannot be despised. There is a degree of energy and sturdy independence about them, incompatible with contempt. Abuse them as we may, it must still be admitted they are a singular and original people.

Nature, in framing a Yankee, seems to have given him double brains, and half heart.

‘The character of the New Englanders is a subject on which, I confess, I feel tempted to be prolix. In truth, it seems to me so singular and anomalous, so compounded of what is valuable and what is vile, that I never feel certain of having succeeded in expressing the precise combination of feeling which it inspires. As a philanthropist, I should wish them to be less grasping and more contented with the blessings they enjoy, and would willingly barter a good deal of vanity, and a little substantial knavery, for an additional infusion of liberal sentiment, and generous feeling.’

It will, of course, readily occur to our readers, that this same ‘New England character,’ which our author is pleased to represent as so very ‘singular and anomalous,’ and which he has painted in such very flattering colors, is no other than that of his own countrymen, himself included, except so far as he may have metamorphosed, or, as he would probably say in his improved English, *transmogrified* himself, by his campaigns in foreign countries. Englishmen are of course Englishmen all the world over, and there is no part of the world, in which the characteristics of the common stock have been sustained with greater purity, or with a less mixture of foreign alloy, than in New England. Our author himself admits, that ‘two centuries have done little to efface the character which our forefathers brought with them.’ All the *gentillessoes* which we have quoted above, are therefore so many pretty compliments which the gallant gentleman has paid, apparently with a most innocent unconsciousness, to his countrymen, his neighbors, and himself. We find accordingly that the objections which are here made to the New England character, though stated in an unusually ill-natured form, are no other than the standing and hackneyed topics of reproach, which have always been urged against the English of the mother country; such as excessive gravity, an external coldness and reserve, which are supposed to indicate the absence of kind and generous feelings; an exclusive devotion to gain; an indisposition to be amused, and an overweening estimate of their own advantages, political and personal. These are the charges which, for two centuries past, have rung through the continent in a thousand different forms, and are constantly repeated as often as a traveller from the south of Europe crosses the channel. In the last editions by the German Prince, and Baron Haussez, they have manifestly

lost nothing of their pungency. The *morgue Anglaise* is a proverb at Paris. Voltaire exhausted his wit in laughing at the *milords* who were accustomed to parade their weariness,---*promener leurs ennuis*,---through all parts of Europe. Bonaparte, when he spoke of the English, never forgot to characterize them as a nation of shopkeepers, dead to every sentiment of honor and generosity, and actuated by no motive or principle but a paltry love of gain. Madame de Staël, in her *Corinna*, has given a picture of a Scotch tea-party, which is enough to make a man put on a fur cloak in midsummer. Count Pecchio, the last of the travellers in England, tells us, that ‘the English of our day are so tranquil and so cold, that they seem to us men of ice, and that it is often said that they have no blood in their veins.’ It is really not a little amusing to see these stale criticisms on the English, after having, as we have said, rung through the continent of Europe, for about two centuries, been a thousand times over examined and re-examined in England,---allowed as far as they are just ; refuted, denied, or explained, as far as they are false or exaggerated, and so often reduced to their proper value, that the whole question may be regarded as finally adjudged and settled in the highest courts of appeal,---to see them, we say, hashed up anew, with no other change of form but an ample condiment of spleen, and brought forward by an Englishman with an air of importance and almost mystery, as faults newly discovered by himself in the New England character.

Of the various modifications of the English character, the two which are generally supposed to resemble each other most nearly are the New England and the Scotch. This again is allowed by our author, who says that ‘in character there are many points of resemblance between the Scotch and the New Englanders.’ The poisoned chalice, which he wishes to administer to our lips, returns therefore directly back to his own, not merely as an Englishman, but as a native of the particular part of the mother country, in which he happens to reside. It is true that he attempts to make a distinction between the New Englanders and the Scotch, by representing the former as a horde of sharpers, ‘going forth annually by thousands into other regions, to lie, cog, cheat, and swindle,’ while he gives to the Scotch a high character for honesty. It is of course needless to add, that this exclusively New England failing is precisely the one, which is habitually imputed by the English themselves,

though in much more decent language than our author has used, to their northern neighbors. That the Scotch are a set of tall, lean, hungry, red-haired, crafty knaves, inhabiting a bleak and barren region, presenting only one agreeable prospect, namely, that of the road to London, which they annually travel in crowds for the purpose of defrauding and eating out the substance of honest John Bull proper, is the fixed belief of that respectable personage, and is no doubt as well-founded as the corresponding persuasion of a considerable portion of our own countrymen, that the Yankees are employed the greater part of their time in fabricating wooden nutmegs, wherewith to impose upon the simplicity and pick the pockets of the generous, high-minded and too-confiding South. The very remark which our author here applies to New England, that, in consequence of the extraordinary acuteness of the inhabitants in matters of business, the Jews find it impossible to get a living among them, has been, a thousand times over, made upon Scotland, and sustained as often by the identical Scotch proverb which he cites with such apparent complacency as an illustration of it.

The charges made by our author against the New England character, being, as we have seen, precisely the same with those which are habitually urged against the English character, and particularly the Scotch modification of it, whatever foundation there may really be for them, come with rather an ill grace from a traveller, who is himself an Englishman, and from the north country. There are also some personal considerations in our author's case, which, duly weighed, might perhaps have satisfied him, that some at least, and those the most offensive of his accusations, were not so entirely free from doubt as he appears to have supposed them. He lauds himself continually, throughout his work, upon the favorable reception which he met with every where, and, as far as this city is concerned, we can vouch for the correctness of his representation. Now if the Yankees are so entirely given up to the worship of Mammon as he describes them to be :—if their homage is not merely that of the lip, or the knee, but an entire prostration of the heart, the devotion of all their powers, bodily and mental, to the service of the idol ;—how happens it, that they found so much time to devote to the author of *Cyril Thornton* ? What had they to gain, by giving him dinners and balls,—by leaving their counting-rooms and offices, to accompany him on his visits



to the objects that engage the attention of a traveller, when,—as did not always happen,—he would so far condescend from his high estate as to consent to look at them? He brought with him neither merchandise to sell, nor money to buy. There was nothing very imposing in the rank of a Scotch Captain on half pay, and certainly nothing very attractive in our author's conversation and manners. He brought, it is true, letters of introduction to respectable persons in most of our cities. These, however, he did not take the trouble of delivering in person, but, as he is careful to inform us, regularly transmitted through the post-office,—a piece of rudeness, which, in any other country, would have entirely shut him out of society. How happened it then, we repeat, that an unknown foreigner,—unassisted by rank, fortune, or any personal advantage,—coarse and offensive in his manners,—almost unintelligible in conversation,—dropping from the clouds into the midst of a community of strangers, was yet received with marked attention wherever he went? It is needless to say, that the only effective letter of recommendation, which he brought with him, was his literary reputation. The cultivated circles in our cities were curious to make the acquaintance of the writer of a book, which they had read with pleasure, and, in consideration of his talents, cheerfully overlooked the offensive peculiarities in his personal deportment, although they probably did not anticipate the outpouring of malignity with which their civilities have been repaid. Had they been as exclusively devoted to money as he is pleased to represent them, he might and probably would have travelled from Eastport to New Orleans, without receiving any other notice than such as befel him in the North River steamboat and the New York hotel.

The devotion to literary—or to speak more generally—intellectual power, that prevails in this country, is, in fact, one of the remarkable traits in the national character, and is much more deep and fervent,—whatever our author may think of it,—than that which is paid to wealth. Mere wealth commands in this country,—as it must, and when tolerably well administered, ought to command every where,—consideration and respect; but creates no feeling of interest in its owner. Intellectual eminence, especially when accompanied by high moral qualities, seems to operate like a charm upon the hearts of the whole community. This effect is much more perceptible here than in Europe, where the intellectual men are overshadowed by

an hereditary privileged class, who regard them every where as inferior, and in some countries refuse to associate with them at all. The highest professional or literary distinction gives no admission to most of the courts of Europe, and only on a very unequal footing to the fashionable circles. A lawyer or a clergyman of talent is occasionally allowed a seat at the foot of a nobleman's table, but to aspire to the hand of his daughter would be the height of presumption. At the close of a long life of labor he takes his seat, too late to receive any great satisfaction from his new position, in the House of Lords, as Chancellor, Chief-Justice, or Bishop. Through the whole active period of his life, he has moved, as a matter of course, in a secondary sphere. With us, on the contrary, great wealth, the only accidental circumstance that confers distinction, is commonly the result of a life of labor. The intellectual men assume at once, and maintain through life, a commanding position among their contemporaries,—give the tone in the first social circles,—and, at the maturity of their powers and influence, receive from their fellow-citizens demonstrations of attachment and respect, which have rarely, if ever, been shown before to the eminent men of any other country. The Presidencies and the Governorships, the places in the cabinet, and on the bench of justice, in Congress and in the State Legislatures,—the commissions in the Army and Navy,—the foreign embassies,—elsewhere the monopoly of a few privileged families,—are here the rewards of intellectual preëminence. Lord Brougham, though certainly in every way one of the most illustrious and truly deserving public characters that have appeared in England in modern times, has never received from his countrymen any proof of approbation half so flattering, as the sort of civic triumph with which Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster were lately welcomed on their respective visits to the East and the West. Mr. Irving, since his late return from Europe, has been the object of more attention of a public kind, than was shown through the whole course of his life to Sir Walter Scott, undoubtedly the most popular British writer of the last century.

This respect for intellectual power, which forms so remarkable a feature in the national character, ought not to have escaped the attention of a traveller, whose pretensions to notice are founded entirely upon that basis, and who had experienced

the operation of it so favorably in his own person. It has often been evinced, in a very pleasing way, in the testimonials of regard shown to the memory of distinguished literary men, even of foreign countries. At the late lamented decease of the illustrious British poet, just alluded to, the public feeling of regret was evidently quite as strong in this country as in England. Subscriptions were raised at New York, to aid in the purchase of Abbotsford for his family : and a monument to his memory is now in preparation at Albany. We regret to learn that the object, in which the New York subscriptions were intended to aid, is not likely to be effected. The marble tablet that covers the remains of Henry Kirke White, in the churchyard of Nottingham in England, was placed there by a gentleman of this city, no otherwise interested in his memory, than by the pleasure he had taken in reading his poems. The same disposition to honor the memory of the illustrious dead exists in England, but has not in every instance been acted upon in an equally graceful and appropriate manner. The intention, entertained by some of the citizens of London to erect a new monument to Milton, on the occasion of repairing the church of St. Giles, where his remains were deposited, led to a transaction which does but little credit to the parties concerned. The following account of it was copied from the Diary of General Murray, into a late number of the London Monthly Magazine.

‘24th August, 1790.—The church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, being in a somewhat dilapidated state, the parish resolved to commence repairing it, and this was deemed a favorable opportunity to raise a subscription for the purpose of erecting a monument to the memory of our immortal bard, Milton, who, it was known, had been buried in this church. The parish register book bore the following entry :—“12th November, 1674, John Milton, gentleman, consump’con, cancell.” Mr. Ascough, whose grandfather died in 1759, aged 84, had been often heard to say, that Milton was buried under the desk in the chancel. Messrs. Strong, Cole, and other parishioners, determined to search for the remains, and orders were given to the workmen, on the first of this month, to dig for the coffin. On the third, in the afternoon, it was discovered ; the soil in which it had been deposited was of a calcareous nature, and it rested upon another coffin, which there can be no doubt was that of Milton’s father,

report having stated that the poet was buried, at his request, near the remains of his parent ; and the same register book contained the entry, " John Milton, gentleman, 15th March, 1646." No other coffin being found in the chancel, which was entirely dug over, there can be no uncertainty as to their identity. Messrs. Strong and Cole, having carefully cleansed the coffin with a brush and wet sponge, ascertained that the exterior wooden case, in which the leaden one had been enclosed, was entirely mouldered away, and the leaden coffin contained no inscription or date. At the period when Milton died, it was customary to paint the name, age, &c. of the deceased, on the wooden covering, no plates or inscription being then in use ; but all had long since crumbled into dust. The leaden coffin was much corroded ; its length was five feet ten inches. The above gentlemen, satisfied as to the identity of the precious remains, and having drawn up a statement to that effect, gave orders on Tuesday, the 3d, to the workmen to fill up the grave ; but they neglected to do so, intending to perform that labor on the Saturday following. On the next day, the 4th, a party of parishioners, Messrs. Cole, Laming, Taylor, and Holmes, having met to dine at the residence of Mr. Fountain, the overseer, the discovery of Milton's remains became the subject of conversation, and it was agreed upon that they should disinter the body, and examine it more minutely.—At eight o'clock at night, heated with drink, and accompanied by a man named Hawksworth, who carried a flambeau, they sallied forth, and proceeded to the Church. The sacrilegious work now commences. The coffin is dragged from its gloomy resting-place. Holmes made use of a mallet and chisel, and cut open the coffin'slantways from the head to the breast. The lead being doubled up, the corpse became visible ; it was enveloped in a thick white shroud, the ribs were standing up regularly, but the instant the shroud was removed they fell. The features of the countenance could not be traced, but the hair was in an astonishingly perfect state ; its color a light brown, its length six inches and a half, and, although somewhat clotted, it appeared, after having been well washed, as strong as the hair of a living being. The short locks growing towards the forehead, and the long ones flowing from the same place down the sides of the face, it became obvious that these were most certainly the remains of Milton. The 4to print of the poet, by Faithorne, taken from life in 1670, four years before he died, represents him as wearing his hair exactly in the above manner. Fountain said he was determined to have two of the teeth, but as they resisted the pressure of his fingers, *he struck the jaw with a paving stone*

and several teeth then fell out. There were only five in the upper jaw, and these were taken by Fountain; the four that were in the lower jaw were seized upon by Taylor, Hawkesworth, and the sexton's man. *The hair, which had been carefully combed and tied together before the interment, was forcibly pulled off the skull* by Taylor and another; but Ellis the player, who had now joined the party, told the former that being a good hairworker, if he would let him have it he would pay a guinea bowl of punch; adding, that such a relic would be of great service, by bringing his name into notice. Ellis, therefore, became possessed of all the hair: he likewise took a part of the shroud, and a bit of the skin of the skull; indeed, he was only prevented carrying off the head by the sextons, Hoppy and Grant, who said that *they intended to exhibit the remains*, which was afterwards done, *each person paying 6d. to view the body*. 'These fellows, I am told, gained near 100*l.* by the exhibition. Laming put one of the leg bones in his pocket. My informant assured me, continued Mr. Thornton, that while the work of profanation was proceeding, the gibes and jokes of these vulgar fellows made his heart sick, and he retreated from the scene, feeling as if he had witnessed the repast of a vampire. Viscount C. who sat near me, said to Sir G., "This reminds me of the words of one of the Fathers of the Church, 'and little boys have played with the bones of great kings.'"

In the elegant Latin epistle, which the minstrel of Paradise Lost addressed to his father in defence of his devotion to poetry, he ventures to anticipate, with the modest assurance of conscious merit, the posthumous honors that awaited his memory. —'My features too,' he says, 'the sculptor may perhaps one day design in marble, entwining the hair with a garland of Paphian myrtle or Parnassian laurel; but I shall be resting at the time in careless peace.'

Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,  
Nectens aut Paphiâ myrti aut Parnasside lauri  
Fronde comas, at ego securâ pace quiescam.

The poet's vision of posthumous fame has been fully realized. His bust in marble surmounts his monument in Westminster abbey, upon which these beautiful verses appear as an inscription. The prediction of the undisturbed quiet of his last resting-place was, it seems, less fortunate. If we were disposed to retort upon the countrymen of our author the

charges of cupidity, coarseness and utter destitution of all the finer feelings of our nature, which he so liberally makes upon us, we should want no better evidence in support of them, as far at least as a single transaction may be supposed to illustrate the character of a nation, than the fact of the citizens of the metropolis itself invading by night the sanctuary where the bones of Milton were deposited with those of his honored parent, dragging them forth from their consecrated resting-place, breaking the jaw-bones to fragments with paving-stones, pulling off the hair by force from the skull, alternately quarrelling and joking about the division of the spoil, and finally exhibiting the whole to the public for sixpence a head. If the New-York shopman was denounced by our author as a *brutal barbarian*, for venturing to look at him a little too sharply, we should like to know what epithets he would bestow upon the overseer and other parishioners of St. Giles, Cripplegate. We have no inclination, however, to pursue this line of argument, and are fully aware that this disgraceful transaction is in no way connected with the national character, and proves nothing but the brutality of the wretches immediately concerned in it. We have copied it, not as bearing at all upon the present question, but as a narrative, in itself very curious, and fraught with a deep and strong, though painful sort of interest.

While we have no disposition to recriminate upon our author by charging his countrymen with the base propensities which he attributes to us, it is also not our intention to enter into a formal defence of the common English character against the objections which he makes to it, as exemplified here, and which have been, as we have said, reduced to their proper value a thousand times over. The most offensive and at the same time the most groundless of them, is that of a want of generous and benevolent feelings, founded apparently upon a supposed reserve in exterior deportment,---as if a remarkable outward warmth and vivacity of manner were the natural indications of profound sensibility. Every one knows that the case is directly the reverse. The substantial benevolence of the English character, unquestionably one of its most remarkable features, displays itself here, as in the mother country, not in professions, or forms of courtesy, but in acts. There is probably no community on the face of the globe, of equal resources,

where larger appropriations are annually made for objects tending to the relief of distress,---the promotion of learning and good morals,---the encouragement of patriotic and generous feelings, and in general for all purposes, appertaining to the higher department of our nature, than in New England. If it were worth while to go into any discussion upon the subject, we might mention, as proofs of what we have just stated, the proceedings of this description that have taken place in this city during the last year. In the course of the last winter, the project, which had been formed two or three years ago for the foundation of an institution for the Education of the Blind, came to maturity. The plan was submitted to the Legislature of Massachusetts, which made a handsome appropriation to the object. An appeal was then made to the benevolence of individuals, which was promptly answered, by the donation from an eminent citizen of his own residence,—one of the best houses in the city,—for the use of the Institution, on the condition that the sum of fifty thousand dollars should be contributed by other individuals,—a condition which was satisfied within a month. Of this large sum, more than eleven thousand dollars were raised at the Fancy Fair, held by the ladies; and it is really worthy of remark, that a much larger sum was obtained in this way, on this occasion, in the comparatively little city of Boston, than at a similar Fair, held about the same time at London, for the interesting purpose of the relief of distressed foreigners, under the immediate patronage of the ladies of the Royal Family, and all the principal nobility. Hardly was the subscription for the Institution for the Education of the Blind closed, when a new effort was made to obtain funds for the erection of the monument on Bunker-Hill, and within a few weeks nearly fifty thousand dollars were collected for this purpose, principally by the exertions of the mechanics. While these movements were in progress, a collection of three or four thousand dollars was made for the relief of a college in the State of Ohio,—another of the same amount for the Colonization Society, and several more of less importance, beside the regular and standing appropriations for literary, charitable and missionary institutions, previously in existence. Such is the extent of the sacrifices made for these purposes, during the present year: we mention them not as extraordinary,

because we do not suppose that they much exceed the average amount annually contributed in the same way, but simply as the facts nearest at hand that bear upon the question. The amount is certainly considerable for a community, of which the population, including that of the neighboring towns that generally join in such contributions, does not exceed a hundred thousand souls.

The truth is, that our author has entirely mistaken the basis of the New England character, when he states that a selfish and calculating spirit is the leading feature in it. The New England character, like the English and German, which are different varieties of the same common type, is naturally ardent, enthusiastic and imaginative. The German race, which has spread itself over the whole north of Europe, and is now spreading itself over the whole of North America, has always exhibited in all its various locations, and under all the names which it has borne and still bears in different parts of the world, a highly poetical temperament, the basis of which is, of course, a keen sensibility to all the influences of nature, whether physical or moral. We find, accordingly, that Madame de Staël, in her powerful analysis of the German character, considers its leading and characteristic feature as *Enthusiasm*; agreeing in this opinion with the common sentiment of competent judges. Restrained in some degree in its development,—so far as the forms of ordinary social intercourse are concerned,—by the natural effect of a less propitious climate, the ardor of the German temperament has turned itself chiefly to literature and action. While the manners of the nations of the south of Europe are more lively than those of their northern neighbors, the literature of the north is, on the other hand, more poetical, and the moral tone of society more lofty and generous. Count Pecchio, whom we just now quoted, has correctly seized this idea, and has expressed it in a happy manner with immediate reference to England. ‘A variety of circumstances,’ he remarks, ‘tend to repress the passions on frivolous occasions, and to give them the reins on those of importance. In family matters, in social intercourse, in every day discussion, they (the English) exhibit calmness, coolness, deliberation,—in great enterprises, in war, in the perils of the country, courage and enthusiasm. The same Englishman, who hardly returns your salute, and who sits at table with you,



like a Chinese image, in the day of battle, or in the heat of a contested election, gives himself up to unbounded enthusiasm. Where is the enterprise, by which glory may be gained, that the Englishman does not engage in, heart and soul? Mungo Park plunges alone into the deserts of Africa: unintimidated by the mistake of his first journey, he risks a second, and perishes. Captain Cochrane returns on foot from Kamtchatka to Petersburg, a distance of six thousand miles, alone and unfriended, as if it had been a walk in Hyde Park: he goes to America to take another stroll across the Cordilleras, and dies. Lord Byron abandons the sweet converse of the muses, the yet dearer smiles of the Italian fair, to die on a foreign soil, in defence of the freedom of a foreign land. Read the life of Sir Robert Wilson, and you will see how many perils he has voluntarily encountered in the cause of the oppressed, whether kings, nations, or individuals. Any of these men, who showed in these cases an enthusiasm worthy of a knight-errant, would have disdained in social life to be guilty of an act of impatience, even to a servant.'

So far as New England is concerned, the history of the country, from its settlement up to the present day, is little else than a record of the continual sacrifice of every selfish consideration to the loftiest moral principles that can operate upon the human mind. The foundation of the New England Colonies was an act of heroic self-sacrifice on the altar of Religion. So was the whole existence of the pilgrims for the first century and a half, encamped as they were, in a still unsubdued wilderness, with their muskets forever at their sides, a line of French fortresses along the whole frontier, and the Indian with his fire-brand and tomahawk at the back-door. Was this a position to be taken and sustained by men who acted upon selfish calculations of pecuniary profit? See them in the war of 1745, marching out under Sir William Pepperel to the conquest of Louisburg. Was this an act of selfish calculation? What had they to do with the fortress of Louisburg, or with the Austrian succession, which furnished the pretext for the war? See them in the war of 1756, rushing forward a second time with a sort of enthusiasm upon the same gratuitous service, and actually keeping on foot a larger proportion of their population than the Emperor Napoleon ever did of the French, at the height of his military frenzy. The peace of 1763 finally relieved our

fathers from the dangerous neighborhood of the Indians and the French, but only to expose them to another series of hostile invasions from the Government itself. What was now the dictate of selfish calculation? Undoubtedly to pay the tea and stamp taxes, and go on quietly making money. Their whole conduct, from the close of the war of 1756 until the peace of Independence, was another exhibition of the same heroic self-sacrificing spirit, which occasioned the settlement of the country. Nor was it the peculiar virtue of a few superior minds. The Adamses, the Otises, the Warrens and the Quincys embodied and exemplified the spirit that prevailed through the country, and carried the whole population with them at every step in their progress. Our author's view of the New England character is, in fact, the very reverse of the truth. Instead of being governed by an exclusive devotion to gain, these Colonies are almost the only ones in the whole number, that were not founded with a view to pecuniary profit or any secular advantage. Most of the other settlements were made with the direct, avowed, and undoubtedly very honorable purpose of acquiring property. With the pilgrim fathers of New England, the service of God, as they understood it, was the exclusive principle of action; and their extraordinary success affords a fine illustration of the truth of the memorable saying of a profound writer, that 'no state has ever flourished, of which the foundations were not, in one way or another, laid in Religion.' That the foundations of the New England Colonies were so laid, has been the real source, not only of their unparalleled prosperity, but in a great measure of the prosperity of the whole country, which has always received, and still receives, its principal impulse from this quarter. How far the noble principles and sentiments, that uniformly actuated our fathers, are sustained in the present generation of the inhabitants of New England, it is of course not for us to say: but as our author extends his censure over the whole period of our history, and specifically includes in it the venerable founders of the Colonies, it is quite apparent that his opinion, at least, is entitled to very little attention; and that he is incapacitated, either by ignorance of facts or obliquity of moral feeling, from forming a correct judgment upon the subject.

We have been gradually drawn into a somewhat longer dissertation upon this topic than we had intended, and must

hasten to take up the few others, upon which our limits will allow us to touch. In giving an account of his visit to Washington, our author comments at some length upon the character and manners of the principal persons employed in the various departments of the Government, upon the modes of proceeding in Congress, and upon the general principles and operation of our political institutions. As the work was avowedly written for political effect, it is here, of course, if any where, that we are to look for the substantial part of it. We regret to say, that this portion has no more pretension than the rest to the praise of either accurate observation, just and deep thought, or the manly candor and generosity of sentiment, which are never forgotten even by a political opponent, who means to combine with that character the manners and feelings of a gentleman. The strain of thought is common-place; the language coarse, even to indecency, and the statements so entirely at variance with fact, as to become at times almost ludicrous. Of this description is the attempt to make it appear that the British Parliament is a body compelled by pressure of business to be economical of time, while the American Congress does nothing, and has in fact very little to do.

‘It is evident that such a style of discussion,—if discussion it can be called,—could only become prevalent in an assembly with an abundance of leisure for the enactment of these oratorical interludes. In a body like the British Parliament, compelled by the pressure of business to be economical of time, it could not possibly be tolerated. The clamorous interests of a great nation are matters too serious to be trifled with, and time is felt to be too valuable for expenditure on speeches better fitted for a spouting club, than a grave, deliberative assembly.

‘The truth, I believe, is, that the American Congress have really very little to do. All the multiplied details of local and municipal legislation fall within the province of the State governments, and the regulation of commerce and foreign intercourse practically includes all the important questions which they are called on to decide.’

It is a matter of curiosity, to compare with this account the real state of the case. In England, as our author says himself in another passage, the actual business of legislation is done by the Executive department of the Government. There are no standing committees of Parliament, and, as a

general rule, the ministers prepare all the bills. At the time when our author wrote his book, the House of Commons met every day during the session at 4 o'clock, P. M. If a quorum (forty members) was not present when the Speaker took the chair,—a frequent occurrence,—the sitting was immediately adjourned, and the whole day was lost. If a quorum happened to be present, the House remained in session two or three hours, and transacted business commonly with a very thin attendance. A few times, in the course of the session, when some important political question was to be discussed, there was a call of the House, and a pretty general attendance of the members. On these occasions, the debates were sometimes prolonged through the night, and now and then, though very rarely, adjourned to a following one. Special Committees were from time to time appointed to examine and report upon particular subjects, and it is only in this form, that any part of the business of legislation was done by either House of Parliament in Committee.

So much for the pressure of business and the economy of time in the British Parliament. Let us now see how matters stand in this country. Here, no part of the work of legislation is performed by the Executive. The business is distributed at the commencement of a session of Congress among a variety of standing committees of the two Houses, who regularly prepare all the bills. These committees commonly meet every day at ten o'clock, and remain in session till twelve. At that hour the sitting of the two Houses commences, and, as a general rule, the members are all in attendance. They regularly remain together till four; and towards the close of the session, when business becomes pressing, they return and sit several hours in the evening.

The result is, that while in England the real work of legislation is done by the Ministry, and the actual labor of Parliament reduces itself to the attendance of from forty to fifty members two or three hours a day, for the purpose of registering without debate the bills presented to them; in this country the whole work of legislation is done by Congress; the members are regularly all in attendance, and are actually engaged in the despatch of business in one form or another, about six hours a day through the session. Our author's mistakes on this head are the more palpable, inasmuch as the points of comparison between the course of proceeding in England and in this country, to which we have adverted, are all particularly

noted in other passages by himself. It is also worthy of remark, that at the very time when he was preparing his work, the British House of Commons reformed its mode of transacting business, and adopted the American usage of meeting every day at twelve o'clock. This is doubtless one of the instances alluded to with so much bitterness by the author in his preface, in which 'the institutions and experience of the United States were deliberately quoted by certain drivellers in the Reformed Parliament as affording safe precedents for British legislation,' and which were the means of securing to the world the mass of valuable information and elegant language, contained in the work before us.

Our author comments at considerable length upon the style of eloquence that prevails in Congress, of which he appears to entertain a very unfavorable opinion. After this follow some particular observations on the manner of Mr. Randolph, and a long analysis of a speech made by a *Mr. Tristram Burges* of Rhode Island, in reply to Mr. Cambreleng. The 'a Mr. Burges,' is rather comic, and brings to mind the 'one John Milton' of Whitelocke. Mr. Burges, the first man in his native State and a leading member of Congress, is a person, one would think, of at least as much consequence as the author of a second-rate novel. The analysis of his speech is written in a style of gross and vulgar virulence, not often to be met with in the most licentious newspapers. Will it be believed, that the leading topics of ridicule are the changes in his personal appearance, incident to advancing years?

'The orator commenced upon gray hair, and logically drew the conclusion, that, as such discoloration was the natural consequence of advanced years, any disrespectful allusion to the effect, implied contempt for the cause. Now, among every people in the world, Mahometan or Christian, civilized or barbarous, old age was treated with reverence. Even on the authority of Scripture, we are entitled to assert, that the gray head should be regarded as a crown of honor. All men must become old, unless they die young; and every member of this House must reckon on submitting to the common fate of humanity, &c. &c. &c., and so on for about a quarter of an hour.

'Having said all that human ingenuity could devise about gray hair, next came bald heads; and here the orator, with laudable candor, proceeded to admit that baldness might, in one sense, be considered a defect. Nature had apparently intended that

the human cranium should be covered with hair, and there was no denying that the integument was both useful and ornamental. I am not sure whether, at this stage of the argument, Mr. Burges took advantage of the opportunity of impressing the House with a due sense of the virtues of bear's grease and macassar oil. I certainly remember anticipating an episode on nightcaps and Welsh wigs, but, on these, the orator was unaccountably silent. He duly informed the House, however, that many of the greatest heroes and philosophers could boast little covering on their upper region. Aristotle was bald, and so was Julius Cæsar, &c. &c. &c.

'It was not till the subject of baldness had become as stale and flat, as it certainly was unprofitable, that the audience were introduced to the vulture, who was kept so long hovering over the head of Mr. Burges's opponent, that one only felt anxious that he should make his pounce and have done with it. Altogether, to give the vulture—like the devil—his due, he was a very quiet bird, and more formidable from the offensive nature of his droppings, than any danger to be apprehended from his beak or claws. In truth, he did seem to be somewhat scurvily treated by the orator, who, after keeping him fluttering about the hall for some three hours, at last rather unceremoniously disclaimed all connexion with him, and announced that he—Mr. Burges—was "an eagle soaring in his pride of place, and, therefore, not by a moping owl to be hawked at, and killed!" This was too much for gravity; but, luckily, the day's oration had reached its termination, and the House broke up in a state of greater exhilaration, than could reasonably have been anticipated from the nature and extent of the infliction.'

Whatever may be thought of the eloquence of Mr. Burges, it will hardly be doubted by any one who has read the above extract, that our author is a most acute and especially candid and liberal critic. No wonder, that with so exquisite a sensibility to the proprieties and delicacies of social intercourse, he should claim the character of an arbiter of elegance, and undertake to sit in judgment upon the 'shadowy differences' between the forms of civilization in the various regions of Christendom. What unpardonable sin the distinguished Representative of Rhode Island has committed, that has drawn down upon him this tremendous visitation, (which of course he cannot hope to survive) we are not informed. Probably the head and front of his offending is, that he has the misfortune to differ in opinion from the author of *Cyril Thornton* upon the question of the expediency of a legislative protec-

tion for domestic industry. Mr. Cambreleng, on the other hand, by happening to agree with him upon that point, rises at once to the rank of 'a gentleman of great talent, and decidedly the first political economist in the country.'

The remarks on the character and eloquence of Mr. Webster, though strongly tinged with the silly affectation in style to which we have adverted, are conceived in a better spirit, as regards the subject, and we extract them with pleasure, as one of the few passages that do some credit to the discernment and feelings of the author.

'The person, however, who has succeeded in rivetting most strongly the attention of the whole Union, is undoubtedly Mr. Webster. From the Gulf of St. Lawrence to that of Mexico, from Cape Sable to Lake Superior, his name has become, as it were, a household word. Many disapprove his politics, but none deny his great talents, his unrivalled fertility of argument, or his power, even still more remarkable, of rapid and comprehensive induction. In short, it is universally believed by his countrymen, that Mr. Webster is a great man; and in this matter I certainly make no pretension to singularity of creed. Mr. Webster is a man of whom any country might well be proud. His knowledge is at once extensive and minute, his intellectual resources very great; and, whatever may be the subject of discussion, he is sure to shed on it the light of an active, acute, and powerful mind.

'I confess, however, I did meet Mr. Webster under the influence of some prejudice. From the very day of my arrival in the United States, I had been made involuntarily familiar with his name and pretensions. Gentlemen sent me his speeches to read. When I talked of visiting Boston, the observation uniformly followed, "Ah! there you will see Mr. Webster." When I reached Boston, I encountered condolence on all hands. "You are very unfortunate," said my friends, "Mr. Webster set out yesterday for Washington." Whenever, at Philadelphia and Baltimore, it became known that I had visited Boston, the question, "Did you see Mr. Webster?" was a sequence as constant and unvarying as that of the seasons.

'The result of all this was, that the name of Webster became invested in my ear with an adventitious cacophony. It is not pleasant to admire upon compulsion, and the very pre-eminence of this gentleman had been converted into something of a bore. To Washington, however, I came, armed with letters to the unconscious source of my annoyance. The first night of my arrival I met him at a ball. A dozen people pointed him out to

my observation, and the first glance rivetted my attention. I had never seen any countenance more expressive of intellectual power.

‘The forehead of Mr. Webster is high, broad, and advancing. The cavity beneath the eyebrow is remarkably large. The eye is deeply set, but full, dark, and penetrating in the highest degree; the nose prominent, and well defined; the mouth marked by that rigid compression of the lips by which the New Englanders are distinguished. When Mr. Webster’s countenance is in repose, its expression struck me as cold and forbidding, but in conversation it lightens up; and when he smiles, the whole impression it communicates is at once changed. His voice is clear, sharp, and firm, without much variety of modulation; but when animated, it rings on the ear like a clarion.

‘As an orator, I should imagine Mr. Webster’s forte to lie in the department of pure reason. I cannot conceive his even attempting an appeal to the feelings. It could not be successful; and he has too much knowledge of his own powers to encounter failure. In debate his very countenance must tell. Few men would hazard a voluntary sophism under the glance of that eye, so cold, so keen, so penetrating, so expressive of intellectual power. A single look would be enough to wither up a whole volume of bad logic.

‘In the Senate, I had, unfortunately, no opportunity of hearing Mr. Webster display his great powers as a debater. During my stay, the subjects on which he happened to speak were altogether of inferior interest. In the Supreme Court he delivered several legal arguments, which certainly struck me as admirable, both in regard to matter and manner. The latter was neither vehement nor subdued. It was the manner of conscious power, tranquil and self-possessed.

‘Mr. Webster may be at once acquitted of all participation in the besetting sins of the orators of his age and country. I even doubt, whether, in any single instance, he can be fairly charged with having uttered a sentence of mere declamation. His speeches have nothing about them of gaudiness and glitter. Words with him are instruments, not ends; the vehicles, not of sound merely, but of sense and reason. He utters no periods full of noise and fury, like the voice of an idiot, signifying—nothing; and it certainly exhibits proof that the taste of the Americans is not yet irretrievably depraved, when an orator like Mr. Webster, who despises all the stale and petty trickery of his art, is called by acclamation to the first place.

‘In conversation, Mr. Webster is particularly agreeable. It seems to delight him, when he mingles with his friends, to cast



off the trammels of weighty cogitation, and merge the lawyer and the statesman in the companion ;—a more pleasant and instructive one I have rarely known in any country. As a politician, the opinions of Mr. Webster are remarkably free from intolerance. His knowledge is both accurate and extensive. He is one of the few men in America who understand the British Constitution, not as a mere abstract system of laws and institutions, but in its true form and pressure, as it works and acts upon the people, modified by a thousand influences, of which his countrymen in general know nothing.'

The censures, bestowed by our author upon the style of speaking which prevails in Congress, though ridiculously exaggerated, have some foundation in truth. While the leading orators in both Houses are quite equal or perhaps superior to the first in the British Parliament, the average is a good deal lower ; in other words, there are more indifferent speeches in proportion to the good, precisely because there is a greater amount of speaking in proportion to the business done. In England, the debate on general questions is commonly left to some two or three of the leading members on each side. The others reserve themselves for local and particular questions, upon which they are particularly informed. Here, on the contrary, when a great question comes up, every gentleman, who can speak at all, seems to think it necessary to declare his opinion at length. The reasons for this difference are sufficiently obvious, but it is equally so, that the British practice is more favorable to a prompt and intelligent despatch of business.

In connexion with the account of his visit to Washington, and in two or three other passages of his work, our author comments at some length, as we have already remarked, upon the principles and operation of the political institutions of the country. His conclusions are all unfavorable, but as the premises from which they are drawn are generally common-place, we really see no reason, why he should have thought it necessary to write a new book, for the purpose of bringing before the British public political views, which may be found about as well stated in every newspaper and review. His theory is, that a purely popular government is impracticable, especially one that involves the principle of universal suffrage, and that this is the rock upon which we must finally split :—that we go along very well at present, while the population is

comparatively scanty, but that, when it becomes more dense, the non-proprietors will take all the power into their own hands, abolish property, and throw the whole country into confusion. This result he considers not only as inevitable, but as not very distant, and as likely to occur within the period of the present or the next generation.

As there is no novelty in these objections, so the answer which, as our author says, was made to them repeatedly by intelligent gentlemen with whom he conversed upon this subject, is equally familiar, and to our minds perfectly satisfactory, although it failed to clear up the doubts of the worthy traveller. 'The general answer is,' he says, 'that the state of things which I have ventured to describe is very distant. It is enough for each generation to look to itself, and we leave it to our descendants some centuries hence, to take care of their interests, as we do o' ours. We enjoy all manner of freedom and security under our present institutions, and really feel very little concern about the evils that may afflict our posterity.' To us, we must confess, this language appears to be conformable, not merely to practical good sense, but to the soundest and deepest theories of political science. The best government for every community is that which is best adapted to its actual condition, and if the one best adapted to its actual condition be also the one actually established and in operation, it would seem to be the height of madness to make complaint, or to wish for a change. Now it is fully admitted by our author, that the present Constitution is the one best adapted to the actual condition of the United States; he goes farther even, and admits with emphasis,—how consistently with many observations in other parts of the work, it is not for us to say,—that if the present Constitution could be maintained, it would be the best of all possible governments. 'At present, the United States are perhaps more safe from revolutionary contention, than any other country in the world. But this safety consists in one circumstance alone. *The great majority of the people are possessed of property*: have what is called a stake in the hedge; and are therefore by interest opposed to all measures, which may tend to its insecurity. It is for such a condition of society that the present Constitution was framed; and *could this great bulwark of government be considered as permanent as it is effective, there could be no assignable limit to the prosperity of a people, so favored.'*

The result is, then, upon the statements and admissions of our author himself, that we have in operation in this country the form of government which, abstractly considered, is the best of all possible forms, and which is at the same time the one best adapted to our actual condition. Is not this enough? It really seems to us, that a government, which can with truth be so described, is precisely the *beau idéal*, upon which the patriot in every country should fix his eye as the perfect,—though perhaps in his own case unattainable,—model; and that the country, in which it is actually established and in full operation, has nothing more in this respect to wish or hope. To obtain a form of government well adapted to their actual condition, and at the same time making some distant approach to those which appear most plausible in theory, has been heretofore the highest attainment of the most favored communities,—we had almost said the limit of their ambition. In our particular case, by an extraordinary concurrence of favorable circumstances, the best possible form of government is also the one best adapted to the actual condition of the people, and, what is of still more importance, the one actually established. Such, we say, are the admissions of the author: and if this state of things do not satisfy him, we can only say that he is even more fastidious on the subject of political institutions, than he is on the higher matters of the mode of eating eggs and the *tournure* of the New York ladies.

But, he says, this state of things cannot last. An unfavorable change in the condition of the people is inevitable: the non-proprietors must in the course of time become the majority. What then? Admit that all this is true: that a change in the condition of the people will have taken place before the year 2000, and that a form of Government different from the one now established will be better adapted to that state of things, than the present one. Does it therefore follow, that we are now to destroy our present Government and institute the other? Does not our author perceive, that for the very reason that the latter is better adapted to a different state of society, it is of course not so well adapted to the existing one? Suppose that it were supernaturally revealed to a person, standing firmly on both his legs at the age of twenty-one, that at the age of fifty he would fracture one of them and be obliged to have it amputated. He would no doubt regard this

as a misfortune, but would he, as a prudent man, undertake to remedy the evil by sending for a surgeon and having one of his limbs amputated immediately? Would he act wisely to deprive himself of the use of a sound leg for thirty years, because a wooden one might after a certain period be better adapted to the existing state of his body, than one of his natural ones? This is a correct illustration of the course which appears to be recommended by our author, and which we certainly consider as most extraordinary. If we are destined to suffer an unfavorable change in our condition, so much the worse. When the change comes, we or our descendants must meet it, as we or they best may. In the mean time, we are well, and very well. Policy, duty, common sense demand of us to let very well alone.

If, as our author affirms, the present Government of the United States be in theory the best of all possible systems, and be also the one best adapted to our present condition, it is of course absolutely and in all respects the best we could now have, whatever changes in it may hereafter be rendered necessary or expedient by changes in the state of the country. But, after all, how does it appear that the threatened unfavorable change in the state of the country is so inevitable as our author appears to suppose? In this, as in many other cases, the worthy traveller, who is a little addicted to delivering oracles *ex cathedrâ*, has not condescended to give us very explicitly the reasons on which he founds his opinion. He tells us merely, that 'the population of the United States doubles itself in about twenty-five years; that at this rate it will amount in half a century to fifty millions; that before that period, it is *very certain* that the pressure of the population on the means of subsistence, especially in the Atlantic States, will be great: that the price of labor will have fallen, while that of the necessities of life must be prodigiously enhanced; that the poorer and more suffering class will want the means of emigrating to a distant region of unoccupied territory; that poverty and misery will be abroad, and that the great majority of the people will be without property of any kind, except the thews and sinews with which God has endowed them.' Why or how all this is so *very certain*, he does not say, and as the burden of proof rests upon himself, he has of course failed in sustaining his position. This is all which, for the purpose of refuting his theory,

it would be necessary for us to add upon the subject. Before he can reasonably expect us to abolish the best of all possible Governments, and substitute a confessedly inferior one, he is bound, not merely to assert, but to prove to us, that the change in our condition, which would, according to him, render such a proceeding expedient, is likely to occur. We may add, however, that his conclusions as to the probable state of things half a century hence,—however certain he may think them,—are directly in the teeth of the experience of the last two centuries. During that time, population has regularly advanced at a rate on the average considerably more rapid than the one he states as probable in future, but is so far from pressing on the means of subsistence, that the necessities and comforts of life were never so abundant as they are at this moment,—that the price of labor never was so high ;—that emigration is checked, not because the poorer classes want the means of emigrating, but because their labor is in such demand that they are under no temptation to go elsewhere ;—that poverty and misery are hardly known ;—and that the majority of the people are all,—as he himself says,—in possession of more or less property. Why this is so, is just as evident as the fact is certain. The progress of population naturally brings with it the division of labor and the improved methods of applying it, which of course render it more productive, and reward the laborer with a greater amount of the necessities and comforts of life. No sufficient or even plausible reason can be given, why the same process should not continue for the two next centuries, that has been going on for the two last. The history of what is, as a French writer justly remarks, is the history of what has been and of what is to be. For ourselves, we are quite as confident as our author professes himself to be of the contrary, that so far as the progress of population alone is concerned, and leaving out of view all other circumstances, the changes that are likely to occur in the state of the country will be for the better, and not for the worse : that for this and the two next centuries, the comforts and necessities of life will be more abundant, in proportion to the numbers of the people, than they are now ;—the price of labor higher ;—emigration less considerable ;—poverty and misery less frequent ;—and the majority of the people better off in the way of property. Whether other circumstances of an unfavorable character may not occur during that period, that will counter-

act wholly or in part these results, is a different question, and one which we need not examine for the purpose of the present argument, since our author rests his case entirely on the supposed unfavorable effect of the single cause, to which we have alluded.

The views of our author, upon the general principles of the political institutions of the United States, are therefore entirely baseless and extravagant. His observations on particular points are hardly more correct, nor would it be easy to reconcile either the spirit or the details of the different passages in which they are respectively contained. After pronouncing, as we have seen, *ex cathedrâ*, that the Constitution is perfect, if it would only last, he finds, on examining the several parts in detail, hardly any thing to approve. The principle of elective magistracies is bad ;—the shortness of the time for which the President is chosen is bad ;—the exclusion of the Cabinet Secretaries from Congress is bad ;—and, to pass over other minor points, in the opinion of this most intelligent and judicious observer, *the Union of the States is bad!!!* ‘The experiment of periodically electing the chief officer of the Commonwealth has been tried and failed. While *confessing the grossness of the failure*, many Americans would willingly attribute it to the injudicious provisions for the collection of the national suffrage.’ This interesting piece of information is,—as the newspapers say,—‘important if true.’ We had hitherto supposed, in the simplicity of our hearts, that the chief officer of the Commonwealth had been for half a century past elected in most of the States annually, in some every three or four years, and for the United States at large every four years, in such a way that the affair, instead of being ‘a gross and acknowledged failure,’ had passed off on the whole to the general satisfaction. Within the limited compass of our observation, we have never happened to meet with an individual who wished the present system to be changed, or with any publication, recommending a mode of designating a chief magistrate, other than that of popular election. So far as the office of President of the United States is concerned, which our author appears to have had particularly in view, we had supposed it to be generally acknowledged, not that the experiment had failed, but that it had succeeded a good deal better than perhaps could reasonably have been expected. Of the seven Presidents, who have

been elected under it, the six first, viz: Washington, the two Adamses, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe,—though certainly far from being on a level in point of qualifications for the office,—were all, by general acknowledgment, among the most eminent and best qualified persons in the country. Mr. Monroe, the least conspicuous of the number, is yet spoken of by our author, deservedly, in very handsome terms, and was as much superior to the hereditary rulers of the ordinary European standard, as Washington was to him. As to the qualifications of the present incumbent, which are still the subject of party controversy, there would no doubt be a difference of opinion. A large and respectable portion of the citizens who opposed his election would probably say, that in his case the system has in fact failed. But were this even admitted, it might still be pertinently asked, whether any system can be expected to produce the best possible results oftener than six times out of seven. On the other hand, the large majority of the citizens who elected General Jackson, look upon him as the very Phœnix of Presidents, and from the tone of our author's remarks upon the subject, we should have supposed that he inclined to this opinion. He certainly, if his account may be believed, 'retired from the interview he had with General Jackson, with sentiments of very sincere respect for the intellectual and moral qualities of the American President.' We doubt whether he could have said as much as this, of a majority of the hereditary rulers of Europe. Add to this, that in the innumerable instances in which the same system has been applied in the several States, it has brought out, almost uniformly, men of great respectability,—often the very first men in the country, such as Jefferson, Dewitt Clinton, and Jay,—and in no one case, as far as we are informed, any person notoriously incapable. We cannot but think, that instead of having grossly failed, it must be regarded on the whole, as having in a remarkable manner succeeded. In fact, the capacity of the people at large to elect the principal political functionaries, is considered, by competent judges, as one of the least questionable points in the theory of government. Montesquieu, at least as high an authority on a political question as the author of Cyril Thornton, tells us that 'the people are admirably well qualified to elect those who are to be entrusted with any portion of their power. If there were a doubt of this, we need only to recol-

lect the continual succession of astonishing elections that were made by the Athenians and the Romans, which certainly cannot be attributed to chance.\* The history of the United States, so far as we have proceeded, will be regarded by future political philosophers, as furnishing another example, not less striking than those of Athens and Rome.

While, in one part of his work, our author pronounces the Constitution to be the best of all possible governments, if it could but last, and in another finds fault with almost every important provision, he finally tells us in a third, with great frankness, that he does not know what it is. *The difficulty of understanding the Federal Constitution*, is the running title of one of his pages, and in the text beneath it he remarks, that 'of the Federal Government it is difficult to speak with any precision, because it is difficult to ascertain with any precision the principles on which it is founded.' If he had had the good sense to wait till he did understand it before he wrote upon it, he would have spared himself much trouble, and the world a very useless and mischievous book. In connexion with this remark, he introduces the opinion alluded to above, that the Union of the States is a bad thing, which he developes in a passage occupying two or three pages, under the running title of *The Disadvantages of the Union*. These supposed disadvantages appear to resolve themselves into this: that it is difficult for States, having different climates and productions,—some growing cotton, rice, tobacco and sugar, and others wheat and maize, —some agricultural, some manufacturing, and some commercial, —to reconcile their adverse interests, so as to go along comfortably together under the same government as members of one body politic. It did not occur to the worthy traveller, that the precise circumstance, of a difference in productions and occupations, constitutes a unity instead of a diversity of interest,—that the opposition of interest is between different persons engaged in the same occupations,—and that for South Carolina and Massachusetts to quarrel because one raises cotton and the other manufactures it, would be, as the late Mr. Dexter very properly remarked, about as reasonable as for two persons of different sexes to quarrel about the difference in their physical conformation. But without undertaking to refute these crude objections, it may be sufficient to remark

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\* Spirit of Laws. Book 2. Chap. 2.



that our author's doubts about the advantages of the Union afford the strongest proof, which he could possibly have given, how little he in fact understands the Federal Constitution or any of the political institutions of the country. To those who possess any tolerably correct notions on these subjects, it is superfluous to say that the great idea of the Union of the States is, in substance, the whole Federal Constitution :—the particulars, excepting so far as they affect the existence or non-existence of this vital principle, are mere matters of form. Differences of opinion about the construction of the instrument, with the same exception, are comparatively unimportant. The right claimed by South Carolina to annul the Constitution and laws at discretion, comes, of course, within the exception, and has fortunately been put down by the unanimous acclamation of the whole country ; but, as to the other points upon which differences of opinion have existed, such as whether the General Government has or has not a right, under the Constitution, to establish a bank or a national university, to lay out new roads and make other internal improvements, and so forth, —the importance of their being decided in one way or another is like dust in a balance, compared with that of the great principle of the Constitution, a real and effective union of the States for all purposes of foreign and international concern. This is the prominent, all-important, we had almost said only important feature in our political institutions ; and it is therefore not to be wondered at that an observer, who considers the union as an evil, should be at a loss to understand the nature and operation of the Government. On this subject, as on the one to which we before alluded, the true doctrine was explained to him in this country, but seems to have been lost upon him, although it is textually set down with great candor in his book. He is of the class of persons foretold in Scripture, who, hearing, were to hear, but not understand. In answer to his crude and puerile objections to the policy of the Union, he was told at Washington by a distinguished member of the House of Representatives, in strong and rather coarse language, provoked probably by his impertinence, that ‘the Union was necessary to prevent us from cutting each others’ throats.’ This is the conclusion of the whole matter in a nut-shell. If our author had possessed wit enough to comprehend the meaning of this brief oracle, which is yet not very obscure, he would have gone home a wiser man than he came,

and have written a much better book than he has done. The Union relieves our great and growing family of independent States from the curse of continual war, which has always desolated Europe, and secures to them, in actual reality, what has been often regarded as the golden dream of visionary speculators,—PERPETUAL PEACE. This single advantage puts a new face upon the whole political condition of the country. The continual recurrence of wars with other neighboring states,—the necessity of providing for them and carrying them on with efficiency,—the consequences that naturally result from them,—are the causes, that have mainly determined the form of the government in every other nation of which we know the history. The preliminary establishment on this continent of the opposite principle of union and perpetual peace, not only ‘prevents us from cutting each others’ throats,’—not only relieves us from the destruction of life and property incident to war,—but enables us to simplify our political machinery, and to go along quietly and prosperously under institutions, which in a different state of things would be impracticable. It has been said by some indiscreet citizens, in the course of the late controversies, that the true motto of the patriot is *Liberty first and Union afterwards*, but the truth is, that the preliminary existence of the Union is the necessary condition of the liberty we enjoy. It is owing to the Union and the permanent internal peace consequent upon it, that we are able to combine a complete security for personal rights with an extension of the sphere of individual action, and a contraction of that of government, greater than were ever imagined possible before. Abolish the Union,—introduce,—what would necessarily follow,—a system of permanent war among the States, instead of the existing one of permanent peace,—and you introduce, of course, the vast military establishments, the triumphant military leaders, the intolerable burdens, and the *passive obedience*, which regularly accompany the train of that great scourge of the human race. Universal suffrage,—elective magistracies,—representative assemblies, the liberty of speech, the press and public worship,—trial by jury,—would of course disappear at once. We hold these, and all the other personal and political privileges of which we are so justly proud, simply and solely on the condition of maintaining the Union.

The Union of the States is therefore the Alpha and Omega,—the A. B. C. and X. Y. Z.—the beginning, middle and end,

—the all in all,—of our political institutions. A writer, who professes to consider it as an evil, only shows that he has not obtained the most remote insight into their true principles and character. After mentioning the answer given to him by ‘the distinguished Representative’ as above quoted, he adds, that ‘*if* the Union be as important as it appears to be considered in the United States, it were to be wished that it were more likely to endure;’ and predicts, no doubt with great regret, that ‘the eral Constitution, like other bubbles, is at any time liable to burst, when the world will discover that its external glitter covered nothing but wind.’ We are glad,—so far as our humble judgment can be supposed to have any weight with so great a personage,—to assure him that the Union is in no danger. The experience of the last year has done much to confirm the assurance of its long duration, which the soundest thinkers have always felt from a consideration of the circumstances of the country. The Federal Constitution is not, as our author supposes, a glittering bubble, covering nothing but wind, and liable to burst at any moment. It is the beautiful and well-proportioned form, belonging by nature to a living, substantial, powerful, active and healthy political body. To destroy it would be just about as practicable, as to tear off the integuments from the frame of a living man: the operation could in either case only be effected by the complete destruction of life. The States are not only formally and by compact, but naturally and substantially, ONE PEOPLE. They are, with slight and unimportant circumstances of exception, one in their origin; one by their geographical position and frequent relations; one by their community of manners, language, laws and religion. These,—whatever our author may think of it,—are not airy nothings, like the wind that inflates a bubble, but substantial realities. They *naturally* carry with them the political unity of the communities among which they exist; and what nature,—God,—has united, man *cannot* put asunder. It is not merely impolitic and inexpedient, but impossible permanently to separate the States. If, by any accidental convulsion, (and such an event is hardly within the compass of contingencies,) they should be temporarily separated, they would rush together again immediately, perhaps under a different form of union—with a wholly irresistible force of attraction. To attempt to break up the Union by ordinances and speeches in Convention,—the ‘paper bullets of the brain,’—is like launching

one of our author's glittering bubbles in the face of a strong norther. Every new rail road,—every additional steamboat, as it takes up its long line of march down the mighty Mississippi,—does more to strengthen the bonds of the Union, than all the speeches that have ever been made against it have done to weaken them. The very newspaper, in which such sentiments are contained, is itself an antidote to the poison it diffuses.

But this is not the time nor the place for a full development of this interesting topic. Our readers are already as much fatigued with our observations upon our author, as we are with his upon the country, and it is necessary to bring them to a close. If there be anywhere an appearance of asperity in our language, we trust that it will be considered as fully justified by the extracts we have given, and especially the outrageous and wholly inexcusable attack upon the gray hairs of Mr. Burges. We cannot conclude without repeating the expression of our regret, at this new example of narrow-mindedness, prejudice and malignity, in the judgments of British travellers upon this country. To every impartial observer, it is apparent that in the order of Providence a great work is in progress here, which is destined to figure hereafter in the rolls of history as one of the most remarkable achievements of the Genius of Civilization. A field has been opened, upon which the intelligence and refinement of a highly cultivated portion of our race may operate without the political restraints which have generally accompanied a great intellectual and moral improvement in the state of society. A numerous and continually increasing cluster of neighboring States have substituted, as the principle of their mutual relations, perpetual peace for perpetual war. The result of the concurrence of these auspicious circumstances has been almost magical. The whole continent is like a vast bee-hive, instinct throughout with life, motion and a joyous activity. Cities,—empires,—(Lowell, Ohio,—our whole Western Paradise justify the statement) rise from the bosom of the earth like exhalations. The wilderness blossoms like the rose; the very rocks and sandbanks (witness Nantucket,—witness all New England,) pour forth products more rich and abundant, than any that ever came from the gold and diamond mines of Peru and Golconda. New forms of government, that had hitherto been regarded as the visions of philosophic dreamers, too beautiful to be ever

realized on this terrestrial sphere, are going on from year to year, in quiet and tranquil operation, in the full view of an astonished and admiring world. As a political power, the country has taken, at the outset of its course, its position among the leading States of Christendom; and the imagination is dazzled in looking forward to its future probable destinies. Such are the scenes, which the Western continent now presents to the eye of the philosophic traveller. If there be any thing to equal them in moral magnificence in the annals of the world, we confess that we have looked for it in vain. With prospects like these before them, it is painful,—it is pitiful,—to see a succession of observers, from the ‘most thinking nation’ in Europe, coming out, professedly on purpose to examine men and manners, and incapable of seeing or feeling any thing but some trifling and generally accidental circumstance, that happens to interfere with their national prejudice or personal pride. The shopmen look too hardly at them;—the merchants refuse to learn Sanscrit of them;—their fellow-boarders eat eggs in a way to which they are not accustomed;—from all which it follows of course that the people are a race of *brutal barbarians*,—that the Union of the States is a *disadvantage*,—and the Constitution a *glittering bubble*. This is worse than the folly of the cobbler of Athens, who, when asked his opinion of a fine statue of Venus, which had just been exhibited, said that he had remarked nothing but a wrong stitch in one of the sandals. An Athenian blockhead, as was well observed by the sage of Bolt Court, is the worst of all blockheads; and truly the blockheads of the modern Athens appear to be determined not to yield the palm to their ancient prototypes.

The apparent motive of all this misrepresentation is even more revolting and ridiculous than the thing itself. If there be one among the achievements of the English nation, of which, more than any other, they have a right to be justly proud, it is the foundation of the great English empire that is now growing up on the western side of the Atlantic: yet of all the European travellers, the English alone are incapable of looking with the least complacency upon their own work. Prince Talleyrand, Baron Humboldt, Châteaubriand, Volney, the Duke de la Rochefoucault were certainly as competent judges of men and manners,—as well qualified to appreciate the value of political institutions,—as the Fauxes, the

Fearons and the Trollopes, or even the Halls and the Hamiltons. All these, and a multitude of others of similar pretensions from the continent of Europe, who have published their observations upon the United States,—while they have pointed out, of course, what they regarded as objectionable,—appear to have received, on the whole, a favorable impression of the general aspect of society. But no sooner do the Chesterfields of Holborn and St. Giles,—the British Talleyrands of the sentry-box and ward-room,—set foot upon our soil, than it changes at once to a wild and barren waste, the abode of nothing but rudeness, ignorance and barbarism. Let us hope, that after a while, and under happier auspices, some pilgrim from the mother country may arrive among us, with a view sufficiently expansive to take in the wonders of improvement that are here in progress,—with a heart sufficiently English to rejoice in the achievements of Englishmen, without inquiring the degrees of latitude and longitude, or the year of grace in which they were performed,—and with a pen powerful enough to do justice to the subject. He might offer to his countrymen, as the result of his observations, a work more interesting and instructive than the celebrated *Germany* of Madame de Staël. Some approach to this was looked for at the hands of our author, as a person of established literary reputation. How miserably the expectation has been balked, our readers have seen. The failure, though on many accounts much to be regretted, is a far more serious misfortune to him than to us. Another better qualified knight-errant will achieve the adventure, and carry off the prize. Perhaps we may finally owe to the graceful genius of some English De Staël the justice, which the men of the mother country have hitherto denied us, and which the daughter of Necker was the first to render to our kinsmen of Germany. In the mean time, we are doing very well,—have the world before us,—and can afford to wait. When Cardinal Fleury was Prime Minister of France, at the age of eighty-five, a young nobleman requested something of him, which his Eminence, being at the moment a little out of humor, was not inclined to grant. ‘Sir,’ said the Cardinal, ‘you shall never obtain what you want during my life time.’ *Monseigneur*, replied the other, *j’attendrai*. ‘I will wait, my Lord.’